

ABSTRACT

The following dissertation reports the findings of a research project conducted during the period from the spring of 1949 to the summer of 1972. The research student was a Parish minister of the Church of Scotland throughout this period, and the work and study was done on

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN THE LIFE OF THE ELDERLY

- studies of the religious attitudes of the elderly in Institutions and those domiciled privately. The project set out to study the religious attitudes of the elderly, through the interview method on the basis of a questionnaire, in certain Institutions and also by random sample among those domiciled privately. The institutions included a Church of Scotland Eventide Home, a Local Authority Home, and two Abbeyfield Homes. The random sample of the privately domiciled was based on the records drawn up as a result of a Parish survey of the congregation of London Road Church, Edinburgh. This resulted in a total number of 184 being interviewed, which was made up of 66 residents in Institutions and 118 being privately domiciled.

The questionnaire had three main sections including the main headings of Religiosity, Adaptation to crisis, and Eschatological belief. This was framed to test certain hypotheses which were grouped as main and sub-hypotheses within the three sections. The three main hypotheses were as follows:-

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Divinity, The University of Edinburgh, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Philosophy.

1974



ABSTRACT

The following dissertation reports the findings of a research project conducted during the period from the spring of 1969 to the summer of 1972. The research student was a Parish minister of the Church of Scotland throughout this period, and the work and study was done on a part-time basis for the Ph.D. degree. The research project set out to examine the religious attitudes of the elderly, through the interview method on the basis of a questionnaire, in certain Institutions and also by random sample among those domiciled privately. The institutions included a Church of Scotland Eventide Home, a Local Authority Home, and two Abbeyfield Homes. The random sample of the privately domiciled was based on the records drawn up as a result of a Parish Survey conducted by the congregation of London Road Church, Edinburgh. This resulted in a total number of 184 being interviewed, which was made up of 66 residents in Institutions and 118 being privately domiciled.

The questionnaire had three main sections including the main headings of Religiosity, Adaptation to crisis, and Eschatological belief. This was framed to test certain hypotheses which were grouped as main and sub-hypotheses within the three sections. The three main hypotheses were as follows:-

(a) That people became more religious when they are elderly. The term 'religious' refers to Church affiliation, attendance at worship, participation in church activities, personal devotional life, excepting those unable to attend Church or participate in activities owing to infirmity.

(b) That religious faith plays an important part in the personal adjustment of the elderly. The term 'adjustment' refers to personal crisis history, which in the majority of cases involved bereavement, and also retirement.

(c) That elderly Church members do not fear death or the process of dying, and have a strong belief in an After-life, Judgment, and Eternal punishment.

The research design and methodology is set out in the first chapter of Part I, and in the second chapter the main hypotheses (including the sub-hypotheses) are examined in the light of relevant research which has been conducted elsewhere according to the information available to the writer. The results of this body of research are compared with the writer's findings and conclusions in the last chapter of Part II (Chapter 8).

The research work of this thesis is set within the context of a broad examination of the role of the Church in the life and care of the elderly. From a study of Christian teaching and practice in the care of the elderly in Chapter 3, which is based on scriptural and theological categories, the writer develops a theology of community where there is a special place for a ministry to the aging. In considering the practical application of this theology of community for the purpose of the care of the elderly a special scheme of Church and Social work cooperation is studied, and suggestions are made for suitable adaptation in another situation. A specific ministry for the aging leads to a consideration of the pastoral ministry in relation to the elderly, and Church programmes for the

elderly emphasises the need to achieve participation by the elderly rather than a mere passive acceptance. It also indicates that while guidance and help in the spiritual life and counselling services are essential and of value within the pastoral ministry, the object of Church programmes is to integrate the elderly into a full social life within their community.

The fourth chapter deals with the composition and background of the questionnaire. Three particular issues are given special consideration in each of the main sections of the questionnaire. They include the history of Church attendance in the Church of Scotland from the few sources available, the crisis of bereavement with guidelines for the care of the bereaved, and some popular hopes and fears concerning eschatological belief in the light of traditional and modern theological understanding.

In Part II, Chapters 5, 6 and 7 include the subject matter of the research with a full description of the interview material, analysis of results (including Tables), and interpretation of the results with special reference to the sub-hypotheses to be tested. This is laid out in the chapters following the three-fold division of the questionnaire. At the end of Chapter 7 six interviews are reproduced as an appendix in order to give a fuller qualitative presentation of the interview material and to show how the interviewer attempted to elicit answers 'in depth' to questions susceptible to this approach.

The principal conclusions which can be drawn from the research programme are considered in Chapter 8, where the main hypotheses

are examined and final estimates of their truth or falsity stated. These results are also compared with the findings of the research discussed previously in the second chapter. In relation to the three main hypotheses it was found that:

(a) the great majority of the elderly interviewed had maintained their religious affiliation, attendance at worship, participation in activities, and personal devotional life. It was not a question of becoming more religious when they are elderly but rather maintaining their previous religiosity.

(b) religious faith and church affiliation played an important part in personal adjustment in the most serious crisis situations, especially in bereavement. A majority of Church members were found to be successful in making such adjustment.

(c) the large majority of elderly church members do not fear death and have a strong belief in an After-life. However the hypothesis was not completely verified because a large minority expressed a fear of the process of dying. While a large minority believed in a judgment after death, there was a very large majority who did not believe in eternal punishment.

Recommendations are also included in the final chapter in relation to the Church of Scotland, the church as congregation, and the ministry of the Church in respect of the care of the elderly at different levels and departments of the Church's life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is aware of his indebtedness to many people but for whose guidance and co-operation this research project could never have been completed. He wishes to express his gratitude to the following:-

to his supervisors, Professor J.C. Blackie and Dr. Mary Noble, who always provided invaluable advice and sympathetic encouragement throughout the period of study.

to the superintendents of the eventide home and local authority home, as well as the management committees of the Abbeyfield homes.

to the office-bearers and members of London Road, Church of Scotland, for the excellent work done in the Parish Survey.

to Professor David O. Moberg, Dr. Belle Beard, and Professor Ethel Shanas, for most helpful suggestions.

to Mrs. D.W. Williams for undertaking the long, arduous, and often tedious task of typing the final copy.

and to my wife and family for their encouragement and support.

Finally, I declare that the following thesis has been written entirely by myself and that the research involved is my own work, and I accept the sole responsibility for all opinions and conclusions expressed within the body of the thesis.

- (a) Examination of research literature in relation to the religiosity of the elderly, and the concept of disengagement 30
- (b) Examination of research literature in relation to the devotional life of the elderly 36
- (c) Results of a television survey of the interest of the elderly in religious programmes 37

CONTENTS

Page

PART I

<u>CHAPTER 1. RESEARCH DESIGN</u>	1
Objectives and Resources - consideration of the hypotheses to be tested	2
Coverage	5
(a) The nature of the population covered	5
(b) Sampling method	5
Methodology - formal interview method with questionnaire	8
(a) Collection of data by the interview method	8
(b) Questionnaire - framing and arrangement of questions	9
Fieldwork	12
(a) The preparation for the interviews	12
(b) The method and time involved	13
(c) Pre-test and pilot survey	13
(d) Interview schedule - difficulties or problems associated with the interviews	14
Analysis and Interpretation	17
(a) Sub-hypotheses	17
(b) Presentation of the data	18
Summary	20
Appendix A. Parish Visitation by London Road Church, November-December, 1970; including a follow-up visitation, December 1971	21
Appendix B. Population distribution for the Calton Ward, Edinburgh County of City, from the 1961 census	27
<u>CHAPTER 2. CONSIDERATION OF THE HYPOTHESES IN THE LIGHT OF RELEVANT RESEARCH LITERATURE</u>	28
First Main Hypothesis	28
(a) Examination of research literature in relation to the religiosity of the elderly, and the concept of disengagement	30
(b) Examination of research literature in relation to the devotional life of the elderly	36
(c) Results of a Television survey on the interest of the elderly in religious programmes	37

(d) Examination of research literature regarding the visitation of the elderly	39
(e) Examination of research literature on the effect of loneliness in the elderly	44
Second Main Hypothesis	48
(a) Introductory remarks on the crisis of Bereavement and Retirement	48
(b) Examination of research literature dealing with grief reactions in bereavement	49
(c) Examination of research literature on the support given to the bereaved	53
(d) Examination of research literature regarding the adjustment made in retirement	55
Third Main Hypothesis	61
(a) Examination of research literature relating to fear of death in the elderly	61
(b) Examination of research literature dealing with belief in an After-life	66
Summary	70

CHAPTER 3. CHRISTIAN TEACHING AND PRACTICE IN THE CARE OF THE ELDERLY

Scriptural Background	71
(a) Authority exercised by the Elderly	76
(b) Meaning and value of life in Old Age	78
Theological Basis	80
(a) A Theology of Aging - with special reference to S. Hiltner's theology of aging	80
(b) A Theology of Community - whereby the Church serves as a Caring Fellowship	87
(i) Criticism of the Church's role in society in the writings of H. Cox	87
(ii) An examination of present congregational structures	90
(iii) The Church's role in community development	93
(iv) Conclusion	98
Practical Application	100
(a) The Church as a centre meeting community needs	100
(i) A church-based Community Service scheme	102
(ii) Conclusion	106

(b) A Pastoral ministry to the elderly - outlining pastoral priorities	106
(c) Church programmes for the elderly	111
(i) Guidance and help in the spiritual life of the elderly	113
(ii) The realisation of a full social life within the community	116
(iii) The operation of a Counselling service within the Church	120
(iv) Age concern Scotland - Counselling Scheme	123
(v) Conclusion	125
(d) The Institutional care of the elderly by the Church of Scotland	126
Summary	133

CHAPTER 4. THE COMPOSITION AND BACKGROUND OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE 134

Design of the Questionnaire - Section A	134
(a) Brief survey of church attendance in Scotland	136
Design of the Questionnaire - Section B	140
(a) The crisis of bereavement	141
(b) Guidelines for the pastoral care of the bereaved	146
Design of the Questionnaire - Section C	150
(a) Popular hopes and fears concerning the 'last things' in the light of traditional and modern theology	152
(i) Fears concerning death	154
(ii) Fears concerning judgment and hell	158
(iii) Hope concerning heaven	163
Summary	169

Appendix: Questionnaire used in the Interviews (including Sections A, B and C)	171
--	-----

Description of the Interview material	173
(a) Crisis situation	173
(i) Bereavement	173
(ii) Other crisis histories	173
(b) Retirement	173

Analysis of the Answers	PART II	232
<u>CHAPTER 5. RELIGIOSITY OF THE ELDERLY SAMPLE</u>		173
Description of the Interview material		173
(a) Church attendance		173
(b) Prayer and Bible reading		177
(c) Radio and Television religious programmes		180
(d) Visitation of the elderly		181
(e) Feelings of contentment or isolation		183
Analysis of the answers with Tables of results		189
(a) Church attendance and participation in church activities		189
(b) Prayer and Bible reading		193
(c) Interest shown in Radio and Television religious programmes		195
(d) Visitation of the elderly, including church visitation		195
(e) An estimate of the feelings of contentment or isolation according to a 3-point scale		200
(f) Attitudes of the elderly towards the helping ministry of the Church		204
Interpretation of the data according to the sub-hypotheses		205
(a) That the elderly, if physically able, go to Church (in respect of worship attendance and church activities) more regularly than when young or in later years		205
(b) That the majority of the elderly maintain a devotional life with Prayer and Bible-reading		207
(c) That the elderly have a special interest in Radio and Television religious programmes		209
(d) That the elderly have regular visits from Family, Friends, Young People, and the Church		210
(e) That the elderly feel more contented and less isolated as they grow older		212
Summary		215
<u>CHAPTER 6. ADAPTATION TO CRISIS SITUATIONS IN THE ELDERLY SAMPLE</u>		217
Description of the Interview material		217
(a) Crisis situation		217
(i) Bereavement		217
(ii) Other crisis histories		228
(b) Retirement		229

Analysis of the Answers with Tables of Results 232

(a) The nature of the crisis situation and the categories of major support 232

(b) Adjustment to the crisis of Bereavement 234

(c) Adjustment to the crisis of Retirement 236

Interpretation of the data according to the sub-hypotheses 240

(a) That the Church, through its ministry and members, provides a major support in personal crisis history 240

(b) That church members are successful in making adjustment to the crisis situations of bereavement and retirement 241

Summary 244

CHAPTER 7. ESCHATOLOGICAL BELIEF OF THE ELDERLY SAMPLE 246

Description of the Interview material 246

(a) Fear of Old Age 246

(b) Fear of Death 246

(c) Belief in an After-life 250

(d) Belief in Judgment and Eternal Punishment 257

Analysis of the answers with Tables of results 262

(a) The different kinds of fear related to Aging and Death 262

(b) An estimate of belief in an After-life according to a 3-point scale 264

(c) An estimate of belief in Judgment and Eternal Punishment according to a 3-point scale 266

Interpretation of the data according to the sub-hypotheses 270

(a) That elderly church members fear death, or the process of dying, less than non-members 270

(b) That elderly church members believe in an After-life more than non-members 271

(c) That elderly church members believe in a Judgment beyond death and Eternal Punishment which non-members do not believe 273

Summary 274

Appendix: Six examples of the complete Questionnaire following the interviews 276

	<u>Page</u>
<u>CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	310
Conclusions in the light of the main Hypotheses	310
(a) That people become more religious when they are elderly	310
(b) That religious faith plays an important part in the personal adjustment of the elderly	313
(c) That the elderly church members do not fear death, or the process of dying, and have a strong belief in an After-life, Judgment, and Eternal Punishment	315
Summary	318
<u>PART II</u>	
Recommendations for an effective ministry to the elderly	320
(a) With reference to the Social Service of the Church (in particular the Church of Scotland)	320
(b) With reference to the Congregation in community	321
(i) Church-based community service	321
(ii) Church programmes for the elderly	324
(c) With reference to the Pastoral Ministry	327
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	331
1. Participation in church activities by elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	192
2. Frequency of Prayer in the devotional life of elderly residents in 2 Institutions	194
3. Frequency of Prayer in the devotional life of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	194
4. Frequency of Bible reading in the devotional life of elderly residents in 2 Institutions	196
5. Frequency of Bible reading in the devotional life of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	196
6. Interest shown in religious Radio and Television programmes by elderly residents in 2 Institutions	197

TABLES

Page

Page

PART I

CHAPTER 1

Table 1.	Table showing the breakdown of the total Sample according to church affiliation and domiciliary situation	8
----------	---	---

PART II

CHAPTER 5

Table 1.	Past and present church attendance of elderly residents in 2 Institutions	191
2.	Participation in church activities by elderly residents in 2 Institutions	191
3.	Past and present church attendance of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	192
4.	Participation in church activities by elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	192
5.	Frequency of Prayer in the devotional life of elderly residents in 2 Institutions	194
6.	Frequency of Prayer in the devotional life of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	194
7.	Frequency of Bible reading in the devotional life of elderly residents in 2 Institutions	196
8.	Frequency of Bible reading in the devotional life of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	196
9.	Interest shown in religious Radio and Television programmes by elderly residents in 2 Institutions	197

Table 10.	Interest shown in religious Radio and Television programmes by elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	238
11.	The nature and the frequency of the Visitation of elderly residents in 2 Institutions	197
12.	The nature and the frequency of the Visitation of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	239
13.	The number of elderly residents experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in 2 Institutions	199
14.	The number of elderly residents experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	199
15.	The number of single and widowed elderly experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in 2 Institutions	201
16.	The number of single and widowed elderly experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	201
17.	The number of single and widowed elderly experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in 2 Institutions	203
18.	The number of single and widowed elderly experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	203

CHAPTER 6.

Table 17.	The nature of the main support given in crisis situations to elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	234
18.	The record of adjustment in the crisis of Bereavement of elderly residents in 2 Institutions	235
19.	The record of adjustment in the crisis of Bereavement of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	235

Table 20.	The record of adjustment in the crisis of Retirement of elderly residents in Institutions	238
21.	The record of adjustment in the crisis of Retirement of elderly residents who were privately domiciled	239

CHAPTER 7

Table 22.	Different types of Fear expressed by elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	263
23.	Different degrees of belief in an After-life, including reunion with loved ones, of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	265
24.	Different degrees of belief in Judgment and Eternal Punishment of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	267
25.	Comparison of the elderly, over and under 75 years, in their belief regarding Judgment and Eternal Punishment in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled	268

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH DESIGN

The title of the thesis is "The role of the Church in the life of the Elderly, which includes studies of the religious attitudes of the Elderly in Institutions and those domiciled privately." The latter presents the results of an examination of the attitudes of elderly respondents given through the interview method on the basis of a questionnaire. For the purpose of this

PART I

Chapter 1. Research Design

Chapter 2. Consideration of the Hypotheses in the light of relevant research literature.

Chapter 3. Christian Teaching and Practice in the care of the elderly.

Chapter 4. Composition and Background of the Questionnaire.

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH DESIGN

The title of the thesis is "The role of the Church in the life of the Elderly, which includes studies of the religious attitudes of the Elderly in Institutions and those domiciled privately." The latter presents the results of an examination of the attitudes of elderly respondents given through the interview method on the basis of a questionnaire. For the purpose of this survey elderly consists of males who are 65 years or over and females who are 60 years or over. It was not assumed or deliberately planned that those interviewed must be church members, and in some cases, by virtue of the sampling method employed in the Parish Survey - which will be described below, they have no church connection.

The total number interviewed was 184; of which 66 were drawn from a Church of Scotland Eventide Home, a Local Authority Home - which included a geriatric ward, and 2 Abbeyfield Homes. The remaining 118 were interviewed in their own homes, either living with others or living alone, and they were selected on the basis of a random sample from a Parish visitation which was conducted by the London Road congregation of the Presbytery of Edinburgh (Church of Scotland). This took place during November and December 1970, and a follow-up visitation followed in December 1971. The programme of interviews was planned and executed by the writer, who was fully responsible for the interviewing of the elderly people concerned. In the case of the 66 persons interviewed in the Institutions no sampling method was necessary, and all the residents were approached

with the object of interviewing as many as possible who agreed to the procedure. In the case of the Parish interviews the random sample - to be described below, included elderly persons who were members of London Road Church, other churches (Church of Scotland and other denominations), and non-members. The field work, which started with a Pilot survey in the spring of 1969, was finally completed in the summer of 1972.

Objectives and Resources - consideration of the hypotheses to be tested.

The meaning of attitude, for the purpose of the survey, can be expressed as the way it provides frames of reference and mental or psychological set which affect the way we judge or react toward others; and in this study relates particularly with belief or faith in the supernatural and the existence of the religious body called the Church.

The survey was designed to test elderly people's attitudes in relation to the following:

- (1) The organised Church and personal religious practices.
- (2) Certain orthodox Christian beliefs, particularly associated with the eschatological themes of death, judgment, heaven and hell.
- (3) Family and community relations with particular reference to support during periods of crisis.
- (4) Widowhood and retirement.

It was decided to test certain hypotheses, as follows:

- A. That people become more religious when they are elderly. In this

case 'religious' refers to church affiliation, attendance at worship, participation in church activities, and personal devotional life - excepting those unable to attend Church or participate in activities owing to their infirmity. In order that the main hypothesis could be adequately tested certain sub-hypotheses were proposed, namely:

- (1) That the elderly, if physically able, go to Church (in respect of worship attendance and church activities) more regularly than when young or in later years.
- (2) That the majority of the elderly maintain a devotional life with prayer and Bible-reading.
- (3) That the elderly have a special interest in Radio/Television religious programmes.

In order that a fuller picture may be gained from their circumstances while testing the main hypothesis, 2 further sub-hypotheses were tested, as follows:

- (4) That the elderly have regular visits from Family, Friends, Young people, and the Church.
- (5) That the elderly feel more contented and less isolated as they grow older.

B. That religious faith plays an important part in the personal adjustment of the elderly. Here 'adjustment' refers to personal crisis history which in the majority of cases tested actually involved bereavement, and also retirement. In a similar way as above, two sub-hypotheses were advanced in this section to test the main hypothesis. They were drawn up as follows:-

- (1) That the Church, through its ministers and members, provides a major support in personal crisis history.

(2) That church members are successful in making adjustment to the crisis situations of bereavement and retirement.

C. That elderly church members do not fear death or the process of dying, and have a strong belief in an After-life, Judgment and Eternal punishment. Again certain sub-hypotheses were advanced in order that the main hypothesis could be tested, and were expressed as follows:

(1) That elderly church members fear death, or the process of dying, less than non-members.

(2) That elderly church members believe in an After-life, and reunion with loved ones, more than non-members.

(3) That elderly church members believe in a Judgement after death and in Eternal punishment, which non-members do not believe.

In Chapter 2 more detailed consideration is given of the hypotheses to be tested with particular reference to research which has been carried out in this country or abroad.

The programme of interviews was planned and executed by the writer, and he was fully responsible for the actual interviewing of the elderly people concerned, and no other interviewer was involved. With the kind help and cooperation of the Superintendents of the Homes involved in the programme, interviews were carried out at the Church of Scotland Eventide Home and the Local Authority Home. The local committees of the Abbeyfield homes were most helpful in facilitating interview arrangements in two of their Edinburgh homes. In connection with the interview programme organised for those living in their own homes, it was possible to make use of the Parish

survey conducted by the Stewardship committee of London Road Church during November and December, 1970 (which included a follow-up visitation in December, 1971). The sample, to be described later, included elderly living on their own and those who were living with others. A full report of the planning and organisation of this Parish visitation is included as an appendix to Chapter 1 (see Appendix A).

listed above the total number of Elderly people recorded was 322. In terms of church affiliation, this figure can be

Coverage

(a) The nature of the population covered

(1) In the case of the Elms Eventide Home (Church of Scotland), all members or residents of the Home were approached by the Superintendent to seek their cooperation in the research project. In actual fact only one person declined the invitation to assist.

(2) At Wedderburn (Local Authority Home, Inveresk, Musselburgh) all members or residents were approached and five declined. A small number of the total interviews arranged took place in the geriatric ward situated in the same building.

(3) In the case of the Abbeyfield Homes, 2 were selected in different parts of the City of Edinburgh, and only 2 persons declined.

(4) The Parish Survey conducted by the Stewardship Committee included the visitation of over 1300 homes and resulted in information being gathered on 322 elderly people, who were either living on their own or with others, and had church connections with London Road Church or other denominations or no church connection at all.

(b) Sampling Method

(1) The type of sample used was a simple random ordered sample.

(2) The sampling unit was the parish (Church of Scotland, London

Road, Presbytery of Edinburgh).

(3) The sampling frame was the list of Elderly people which was recorded by the visitors during the visitation campaign from information, supplied by the Clerical Committee, of householders from the Voter's Roll. (see Report on Parish Visitation, 1971 in the Appendix to Chapter 1).

As mentioned above the total number of Elderly people recorded was 322. In terms of church affiliation, this figure can be divided into the following groups:-

<u>Church membership or close affiliation</u>	<u>No church connection</u>
LONDON ROAD	OTHER CHURCHES
116	154
	52

Further sub-division regarding domestic situation results in the following groups:-

MARRIED COUPLES	THOSE LIVING ALONE	THOSE LIVING WITH OTHERS
	$\frac{M}{18}$	$\frac{F}{176}$
29 (58)		$\frac{M}{13}$
		$\frac{F}{57}$

(4) With a simple random ordered sample taking every third person, listed according to street address, the interviewing schedule was planned to include 40 London Road members,

52 members of other denominations, and as many non-members who could be persuaded to cooperate.

No refusals were encountered as far as London Road members were concerned, but 5 declined from the number of members of other denominations. The actual number of non-members interviewed was 31, and the difference (from the recorded figure stated above) was due to those who actually declined to be interviewed or could not be contacted, and the further number who were discovered to have had a

church connection (or claimed such connection) as a result of the Follow-up visitation, December 1971 [see Appendix A, page 26].

With further regard to non-response, the relatively small number of refusals could be explained by the special relationship of the interviewer with the respondents (particularly members of London Road Church), and also by the fact that he was well-known to many of the others by sight owing to his ministry of 6 to 7 years in the district at the time of the interviews.

It was considered necessary to interview as many of the non-members as possible without making any selection, because the smaller number involved would be statistically insignificant if a figure of less than 30 had been included. As it turned out the proportion of non-members to members, 31 to 87, was 1:3, whereas the proportion from the figures of the elderly recorded in the Parish Survey was nearer 1:5. Finally it should be added that the sampling method benefits from the homogeneous nature of the housing in the Parish area, which is very largely tenement housing lower middle-class and working-class occupants, and it was not considered necessary to resort to a table of random numbers.

The following table is entered for easy reference regarding the domestic situation of the respondents who are privately domiciled, and the figures for Institutions are also included.

Methodology - formal interview method with questionnaire

(a) Collection of data by the Interview method

It was decided to employ the intensive interview method where the object would be to encourage the elderly person to speak fully

Table 1. Table showing the breakdown of the total sample according to church affiliation and domiciliary situation.

	ELMS		Institutions WEDDERBURN		ABBEYFIELD		Parish Sample SHUT-IN		LIVING ALONE		LIVING WITH OTHERS	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Church of Scotland members	7	19	1	9	1	4	1	9	7	37	11	13
Other denominations	2	1	2	9		3	-	-	2	4		3
Non-members	1	-	3	3		1	2	3	2	11	5	8
Totals	10	20	6	21	1	8	3	12	11	52	16	24
Grand Totals	66						118					

"Other denominations" includes:

Roman Catholic	4	Methodist	5	United Free	2	Congregationalist	3	Baptist	6
Episcopal	2	Salvation Army	4						

"Shut in" describes the disabled or invalid elderly confined to their homes.

See also a Table of the distribution of the Parish Sample according to the different age-groups with comparative figures from the 1961 census for the Calton Ward [Appendix B, page 27].

Methodology - formal interview method with questionnaire

(a) Collection of data by the Interview method

It was decided to employ the intensive interview method where the object would be to encourage the elderly person to speak fully

and freely on the particular question involved. Every effort was made to put them at their ease, and the steps taken in this connection are discussed later in the section entitled 'Fieldwork'. All the interviews took place either in the Institutions or in the homes of the parish sample. Open questions form the basis of the questionnaire, and every effort was made to record open responses verbatim at the time of the interview by note-taking. All respondents were asked exactly the same questions, and only a slight change in the order of the questions was made for the second part of the interview programme relating to the parish sample.

(b) Questionnaire - framing and arrangement of questions.

As the method adopted was the formal interview with set questions, it was planned that the answers would be recorded in a standardized form and yet give full scope for a detailed expression of a person's attitudes. The questionnaire was designed to test the main hypotheses already outlined and divided into three parts, and it was intended that the interview should be taken in one sitting.

In Section A of the questionnaire, the first questions provide information on a person's church attendance at present, previously or during youth, and also reference is made to their families' attendance where applicable. Included in this preliminary part of the first section is information on church activities in which respondents are engaged. The next part deals with private devotions - in particular prayer and Bible reading, including the use made of religious programmes on Radio and Television. Further questions seek to determine the type and frequency of visitation enjoyed by former years when this was emphasized in a marked and dramatic fashion.

the respondent with particular reference to family, friends and the Church. Finally the questions centre on estimates of contentment in the lives of respondents and also of loneliness or isolation.

In Section B, the intention is to outline a crisis situation in the history of the respondents, and in the majority of cases it referred directly to their experiences of bereavement. After a history of the crisis situation, the questions seek to determine the nature of the support given with information as to the persons offering the major support, including their remembrance of the part played by the Church. Finally some indication is given as to their success, or otherwise, in the process of adjustment to the new situation. The crisis of retirement is the subject of the concluding question in this section.

In Section C, the questions are mainly concerned with belief affecting 'the last things' of traditional christian doctrine, namely death, judgment, heaven and hell. After a question on fear of the aging process, the next questions seek to probe deeply into fear of death. Because researchers have commented on the unsatisfactory nature of replies to the straight question regarding fear of death, an attempt was made, by five questions on this theme, to gain a more accurate and sincere response to what is admittedly a difficult subject. The question on belief in an After-life was followed by one on reunion with dear ones to determine whether the two aspects of belief are related. Finally Judgment and Eternal punishment are included not only as important aspects of eschatology, but also because many elderly people are likely to remember the preaching of former years when this was emphasised in a marked and dramatic fashion.

It was hoped to determine not only their past recollections but also their present attitudes on these subjects. The composition and background of the questionnaire is treated in greater detail in Chapter 4.

The pre-test and pilot survey established the fact that the interview could be completed within one hour, although in certain cases it proved to be longer. In actual fact the interviewing programme never had to be terminated owing to strain or distress being suffered by the respondents, and most fortunately the subject matter in Section B (crisis history) did not appear to produce any serious emotional upsets. No changes in the actual questions were considered necessary, and only a change in the order of the questions between the sections took place after the interviews in the Institutions had been completed. It was considered more suitable to transfer "Do you feel cut off from society?" from Section B to Section A. Further "Do you think the Church could do more for old people?" and "Do you feel more contented as you grow older?" were transferred from Section C to Section A.

There is always a very real possibility of 'response error' just as there is a real problem of interviewer bias. But while it might have been possible to re-interview a small number of the original sample to test the reliability of the answers, the writer also considered the evidence that it is difficult to present good reproducibility owing to the nature of the questions asked and the tendency for poor long-term memory on the part of the elderly. Where this has been investigated in the medical field, research found

poor reproducibility of simple questions about health in old people.¹ For these reasons it was decided not to attempt the re-interviewing programme.

(b) The method and time involved the interviews were carried out in one sitting (excepting

Fieldwork

(a) The preparation for the interviews In every case the interviews are

As far as the interviews at the Eventide Home and Local Authority Home were concerned, the Superintendents were given full information regarding the object and scope of the programme of interviewing, and were very helpful in preparing the way for the Interviewer's task. Each person was approached by the Interviewer so that they fully understood the nature of the interview, and were assured that their replies would be treated as fully confidential. Every effort was made to put the respondents at their ease, and the interviews took place in a quiet part of the building where privacy could be maintained or the private room of the residents in the case of the Elms Home, or in a room specially designated for the purpose, as at Wedderburn Home.

The same method was employed for the elderly in their own homes, and the Interviewer visited them first to seek their permission and to explain the nature and purpose of the interview. For members of other churches in the parish area, the co-operation of their ministers was sought first, and again they proved most helpful following the information they received on the questionnaire. Under the heading

1. Milne, J.S., Hope, K., and Williamson, J., "Variability in replies to a questionnaire on symptoms of physical illness", Journal of Chronic Diseases, 1970, 22, pp. 805-810.

Head Church, and the adequacy of the questionnaire was tested. There

of "other churches" there were representatives of other Church of Scotland charges, the Episcopal Church of Scotland, Congregational and Methodist churches.

(b) The method and time involved

All the interviews were carried out in one sitting (excepting the pre-interviews), and in almost every case the interviews are complete with answers to all sections. The interviews averaged about one hour, and a preparatory or pre-interview of information and explanation regarding the questionnaire averaged 30 minutes. This gives an approximate time schedule of 276 hours of face-to-face interviewing with approximately 184 contact hours of actual interviewing with the questionnaire. The interviewer wrote up his notes taken during the interview as soon as possible on the questionnaire form, and in all cases during the day when the interview took place. As the interviews included answers on questions 'in depth', verbatim answers (particularly in Section B) were entered on the questionnaire form where appropriate.

A recording machine was not used as it was considered that it might introduce difficulties in the relationship between the interviewer and elderly respondents. As many elderly people tend to be suspicious of modern methods and gadgets there was a danger that they might be upset or distracted by such means. No problems were encountered as far as note-taking during the interviews was concerned.

(c) Pre-test and Pilot Survey

A pre-test and pilot survey was carried out after the framing of the questionnaire with the co-operation of 10 members of London Road Church, and the adequacy of the questionnaire was tested. There

were no indications that people were misunderstanding the questions, and no changes in the wording of the questions was found necessary nor were any insertions or deletions made.

(d) Interview Schedule - difficulties or problems associated with the interviews.

In regard to difficulties that were anticipated and actually encountered, it has already been mentioned that the description of crisis situations in Section B did not result in any emotional upsets. It is a delicate area of investigation and the interviewer was prepared to turn to other questions or even withdraw if emotional upset was met. Fortunately no situation arose which necessitated such action, and needless to say no attempt was made to interview any person who had suffered bereavement in the recent past.

Further difficulty was anticipated in regard to the question 'Do you fear death?' in Section C. As answers to this question have often been considered unsatisfactory by researchers, it was decided to probe deeper by asking if the respondent had any fear of the process of dying. Many people might give a negative answer to the first question, but answer an affirmative in the second for a number of different reasons. In order to arrive at a more accurate assessment of a person's attitude towards death further questions were added, which examined the reaction of the respondent if they had been close to death at any time in their lives or had been influenced by someone else's death.

Considering the interview programme, it was obvious to the interviewer that a great deal depended on his skill in encouraging people to answer questions freely and without embarrassment within

the context and the limits of the questions. His pastoral experience, particularly with the elderly, over a considerable number of years was an important factor in dealing with difficult questions in Sections B and C. It was an advantage also that many elderly people with a Church connection and background (and this applied also to non-members or lapsed members) had confidence in the interviewer as an ordained minister of the Church and were prepared to answer questions of a private or personal nature, especially in the case of crisis history. It is true that 'clerical bias' must operate to a certain extent where the respondent might try to present a favourable impression regarding church affiliation or give an answer favourable to the Christian viewpoint. It might be expected that this bias would operate more obviously in the London Road answers, and yet the interviewer found that there was little evidence that people refrained from a full expression of opinion or tried to put a favourable gloss on their uncertainties of belief. However any answers that were negative in terms of Christian belief could be considered more significant in this case.

It might have been thought that this type of interview would put a strain on the elderly regarding concentration or memory, but the great majority of those interviewed had a remarkably good memory for past events far superior to the recent past, and answered questions of personal history at great length. In fact it often became a test of the interviewer's skill whether he could lead them back to the question under consideration without too much digression on their part. As far as interviewing in Homes was concerned, a great deal depended on the impression made in the initial interviews,

for if it was unfavourable then it was quite likely that the willingness of others to participate would be adversely affected. Fortunately the number declining proved to be low, in all 3 cases. It was quite a different situation in interviewing people in their own homes, for if confidentiality was maintained then no other person was expected to know who had been interviewed. In fact those who declined the invitation or were removed from the list proved to be a small figure which was not really significant.

A further general observation can be added, that in many cases those interviewed expressed the opinion that this was the first time they had had an opportunity to speak about their deeper feelings and reflections in the light of personal crisis history and also their attitude to death and belief. Finally the fact that the interviewer undertook the whole programme of interviews himself meant that there was a built-in standardization as far as procedure and answers were concerned.

(1) In regard to the Interview Schedule the timing of the programme can be set down as follows:-

1. Pilot Survey during Spring, 1969.
2. Elms Interviews during Summer, 1969.
3. Wedderburn Interviews during Spring/Summer, 1970.
4. Parish Survey conducted by the representatives of the congregation during Autumn, particularly Nov-Dec. 1970.
5. First part of Interviews in the Parish, including Abbeyfield interviews during Spring/Summer, 1971.
6. Parish Survey follow-up campaign during Autumn, particularly Dec. 1971.
7. Second part of Interviews in the Parish during Spring/Summer, 1972.

The programme had to be spread over a considerable period owing to the problems associated with planning and executing the Parish Survey and follow-up campaigns, and also because the writer undertook this work as a part-time student in conjunction with his normal ministerial and pastoral duties.

(2) That church members are successful in making adjustment to the Analysis and Interpretation and retirement.

Also - With the assistance of a part-time Secretary, it was possible to scrutinise the completed questionnaires for errors, omissions or ambiguous answers for the final stages of the work. In 1973 the preparation of the material for analysis and interpretation by a coding method and subsequent tabulation was undertaken. Before dealing with the method to be used in analysis, the sub-hypotheses to be tested and analysed are recapitulated.

(a) Sub-hypotheses church members believe in an After-life, and re-
Section A loved ones, more than non-members.

(1) That the elderly, if physically able, go to church (in respect of worship attendance and church activities) more regularly than when young or in later years.

(2) That the majority of the elderly maintain a devotional life with prayer and Bible-reading.

(3) That the elderly have a special interest in Radio/Television religious programmes.

(4) That the elderly have regular visits from Family, Friends, Young people, and the Church.

(5) That the elderly feel more contented and less isolated as they grow older.

and 7 of Part II. The summary of the interview material was followed

Also - do those who are single feel more contented and less isolated than the widowed as they grow older?

Section B.

(1) That the Church, through its ministers and members, provides a major support in personal crisis history.

(2) That church members are successful in making adjustment to the crisis situations of bereavement and retirement.

Also - is successful adjustment regarding retirement related to occupational grouping (for widows the occupation of their husband is taken); and do single women have a high rate of successful adjustment to retirement?

Section C.

(1) That elderly church members fear death, or the process of dying, less than non-members.

(2) That elderly church members believe in an After-life, and reunion with loved ones, more than non-members.

(3) That elderly church members believe in a Judgment after death, and in Eternal punishment, which non-members do not believe.

Also - do we find a majority of those who believe in Judgment and Eternal punishment in the age-group of 75 years and over, bearing in mind that they are more likely to remember preaching and teaching on these subjects?

(b) Presentation of the data

The interview material was summarised according to the questions asked in the three sections of the questionnaire. Each section was included in a separate chapter to form Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of Part II. The summary of the interview material was followed

by the statistical data set out in appropriate tables, and an analysis of the results included to bring out the significance of the data. Lastly, the interpretation of the results was made in relation to the sub-hypotheses which had been formulated in the three sections. In the final chapter, namely Chapter 8, the conclusions which are drawn referred to the main hypotheses of the thesis in order that their truth or falsity may be established. These conclusions are further discussed in the light of the results of other research which had been considered previously in Chapter 2. Recommendations are made at the end of the thesis which can be applied to the Church as denomination, local congregation, and also to the pastoral ministry.

It was decided not to include statistical tests of significance because, in the first place, there was no random selection employed in the case of the Institutions. Certainly it is not possible to use parametric tests because this is not a unit from which estimates can be made of comparable characteristics in the population at large. The institutional population is unlikely to be representative of the population at large in its composition and attitudes. Secondly, in the case of the random sample of the privately domiciled, it was confined to a parochial area of the Church of Scotland in a particular part of the City of Edinburgh where it was not possible to have a cross-section of different classes of society. Because the latter is a small sample numerically, it was found in the analysis of results that the breakdown in the tabulations meant that certain groups contained too few units to be considered statistically significant. Further where it is more

difficult to present the material in quantitative form, that is, when questions of belief, personal devotional life, and crisis histories are being investigated, the problem of sample size and error is not so vital in the determination of the results.

It was decided to express the results in the form of proportions and percentages to help to bring out the significance of the data.

Summary

The first chapter has outlined the construction and procedure of the methodology employed in the conduct of the research. The nature of the population tested has been described in relation to the Institutions and also the privately domiciled. It has been shown that the random sample of the elderly population in the parochial area was based on a private census resulting from the London Road Church's parish survey. In consequence the possibility of any elderly people being omitted was very small even though the actual size of the sample eventually became fixed at 118 elderly. However the research work is set within the context of a broad examination of the role of the Church in the life and care of the elderly. This is considered in detail in Chapter 3 of the work. In the next chapter the main hypotheses to be tested in the research are examined in the light of relevant research conducted in this country and abroad. The arrangement of the material in this chapter follows the familiar division of the three sections of the questionnaire with the research being related to the main hypotheses and various sub-hypotheses already set out in the text of this first chapter.

APPENDIX A

PARISH VISITATION London Road Church November - December 1970.

This Visitation was carried out during the three weeks between November 16th - December 4th. The Clerical Committee had consulted the Voters' Roll (not always accurate) and entered the names of the Householders on Cards which would be used by the Visitor's in their calls. Invariably this resulted, and very often the Visitors were invited to spend some time exchanging views and experiences.

The Parish area includes the following streets:-

Edina Street (3 to 9 odd Nos.)	Brunton Terrace (1-27, 2-32)
Edina Place (8 to 28 even Nos.)	Brunton Place (1-24)
Rossie Place (1 to 27B odd, 2-12 even)	Brunton Gardens (116-166 even)
Maryfield (19 to 27 odd)	Montgomery Street (97-117 odd, 125-131 odd, 86-112 even)
Easter Road (21 to 61 odd, 108 to 116 even, 1-5, 16-90)	Wellington Street (1-25, 2-30)
London Road (2-12)	Hillside Street (5-31 odd)
Elgin Street South (1-16)	Hillside Crescent (15A-37)
Elgin Terrace (1-10)	Brunswick Road (11-16)
	Montgomery Place West (1-15)
	Montgomery Place East (1-4)

It was calculated that 1356 households would be visited (excluding households, where one or more were members of London Road congregation).

The object of the visitation was expressed as 'an attempt to extend a hand of fellowship or friendship' to the people living in the area with the following main aims:-

1. To take note where a request was expressed to join the congregation or any other denomination. In some cases an interest was shown by those who had a membership elsewhere or had lost connection with some other Church. This meant there were four categories in this section:

5. (a) those who decided to transfer their lines to London Road.
 (b) those who decided to join a New Communicant's Class, and
 (c) those who joined the congregation by Kirk Session Resolution, and were all elderly with previous connections with some other Church in the past, and finally
 (d) those who were undecided.
2. To take information where a request was made concerning an organisation (a full list of these were included in a brochure which was delivered to all the households 7-10 days before the visitation commenced), and this covered a wide range from childrens' to older peoples' activities.
3. Regarding those who were already members of another Church or denomination it was hoped that a friendly contact might be made. Invariably this resulted, and very often the Visitors were invited to spend some time exchanging views and experiences. Information re the Church or denomination would be recorded.
4. As it was estimated that a great number of the calls would be made to houses where the inhabitants were elderly, the visitors were asked to take the opportunity if invited, to meet the people in their homes. Information was taken to establish where the Elderly were living with others in a household or living alone, and if possible, to establish age, marital status and Church connection if any.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The work of the Clerical Committee and Stewardship Committee was vital in this visitation, and plans were laid during session 1969-1970 by the Stewardship Committee. The Clerical Committee started work in early 1970, and arranged the following:-

1. Map of the Parish area (Presbytery)
2. Householders' names from Voters Roll
3. Preparation of Cards (to be used by Visitors) which must be clear in the information requested and convenient to handle, and asking only for essential information re above (1-4).
 Printing of Brochures which gave advance intimation of the visit, and included information regarding Church organisations with a list of the nearest Churches of a wide range of denominations. (The Card, Brochure and Instructions to the Visitors are enclosed).
4. Division of the Parish area into suitable sections for the purpose of visitation by groups of visitors.

5. Planning the clerical activities so that a regular staff would be on duty during the visitation to receive and process the in-coming cards.

The Stewardship Committee embarked on an advertising programme for the district through local publicity e.g. posters etc., and also through the Press. Their main task was to organise

- (a) the distribution of the Brochures through Youth organisation volunteers, and
- (b) secure the services of as many visitors as possible.

Following two services (conducted by the Minister and another Minister with experience of a similar visitation) when the accent was laid on the general aims of the visitation programme with reference to the experience of other Churches in the same field. We held 2 Briefing Meetings during the early part of November.

The Clerical Committee were in attendance, and had the cards prepared for different sections of the Parish (see 4 above) suitable for visitation by groups of visitors. The visitor's (total 70) had already been encouraged to form groups of approximately 6 in number with their own leaders, at a previous meeting. They then received the cards with their own area of operation clearly defined.

It was left to the groups to organise their own system of visitation within the following framework of instruction.

1. The Visitation would take place within the stated three weeks.
2. The group were advised to operate in pairs (preferably lady and gentleman) meeting together to exchange information and plan subsequent visitation.
3. Particular care must be exercised in the visitation of the Elderly so that calls took place early in the evening or during the day.
4. An attempt must be made to re-visit where people were found to be out, and if possible a second or third visit would follow if necessary.

5. As the Brochures would be in the hands of the households 7-10 days before, an easy method of introduction would be to show a copy of the Brochure when first contact was made.

BRIEFING

The briefing followed the instructions (handed to all visitors) with the following points emphasised:

1. Check the accuracy of the Householder's name already listed on the card.
2. Where the householder had indicated a membership of another Church or no interest, it was still essential to fill in basic information re name, address, members of household and whether Elderly or Shut-in. The Card should have been printed with a clear space between Elderly and Shut-in, and this was noted in the briefing.
3. Full information to the questions should be written on reverse side of the card.

Distribution of Brochures by members of the Youth Organisations and members took place 7-10 days before the start of the Visitation.

After the Dedication Service on the 15th November, the Visitation proper commenced on November 16th.

VISITATION

The Visitors gathered at 7 p.m. each evening and after a short act of devotion, proceeded to make their visitations, and plan the times of visitation for the coming days. They returned at approximately 9 p.m. with the cards complete, and the Clerical Committee processed the Cards so that reports could be made daily on

- (a) Those interested in follow-up visits by the Minister and Elders in connection with membership (either of London Road or other Churches) Baptisms or some special need.
- (b) Those interested in follow-up visits by organisations of the Church either for themselves or children.

- (c) The Elderly, who were divided into the following categories:-
 Elderly - living alone - or living with others
 Shut-ins
 (Elderly) - living alone - or living with others
 Shut-ins
 (not Elderly) - living alone - or living with others

- (d) A list of those belonging to other Churches was drawn up so that information could be passed on to the Churches concerned.

The visitation was very largely complete by the end of the second week, leaving the third week for re-visits of households where previously no contact could be made. In the end a very small number of these cards (to be quite insignificant) were filed blank.

The visitors reported a very friendly reception in the great majority of visits; and particularly noted the interest shown in the visitation by members of other Churches (including Roman Catholics). They were invited into many homes, and they quickly realised that there are many Elderly living on their own in this Parish area who would welcome regular visitation.

RESULTS OF THE VISITATION

A.

After the end of the visitation the follow-up was planned on the following basis: (The Clerical Committee had provided the information on a daily basis, and so the Ministerial follow-up began before the end of the actual Visitation).

- (a) The Visitation of those who had shown a definite interest in the Church. Elders of the respective districts assisted the Minister, but in almost every case it was necessary for the Minister to meet the people concerned. 87 calls of this kind resulted in 60 people either joining by Certificate, Session Resolution (in the case of Elderly members) or the New Communicant's Class. This was completed (with a break over Christmas and New Year) by the end of January 1971.

- (b) The Visitation of those who had shown a definite interest in an organisation either for themselves or their children. The organisations were given the information to make the follow-up themselves in January 1971, and asked to report to the Stewardship Committee at a later date.
- (c) The visitation of the Elderly, particularly those who had no Church connection, and also giving a priority to those who were living on their own.

It was considered advisable (generally agreed by those who participated in the visitation) that a visitation programme of this kind should be instructed at regular intervals of say 5 or 10 years; and every effort should be made to include (c) above in the regular visitation programme of the Elderly in the congregation, undertaken by the Stewardship Committee.

B.

A follow-up visitation was organised in December, 1971 (one year after the original visitation of the Parish), and 14 visitors concentrated on the visitation of the Elderly where records were incomplete or no church connection was recorded. The total visited was 62, and as a result it was discovered that 10 had some form of church connection. Thus the number of non-members was established as 52 as far as this survey was concerned.

The Kirk Session instructed the Elders serving districts (for pastoral care) within the Parish area to notify the Session and Stewardship Committee of changes - notified by their Lady visitors, so that a record could be maintained of movement of population. So it was hoped that the card index of families etc. (particularly the elderly and disabled) will be brought up to date and maintained in this way in the future.

APPENDIX B

The Table underneath is taken from the 1961 Census, and enters the population distribution for the Calton Ward, Edinburgh County of City, in which the Parish of London Road Church is situated. The only figures available for the 1971 Census were for the Edinburgh County of City.

With this table the distribution of the Parish Sample according to the various age-groups has also been entered, and it can be seen that there are more males in the over-75 years age group compared with the under-75 years, but for the females it is almost equal.

17. CALTON WARD

AGE last birthday	Persons	MALES			FEMALES		
		Total	Single	Married	Total	Single	Married
Total	15,389	7,118	3,061	3,665	8,271	3,309	3,726
Widowed	1,475	329			1,146		
Divorced	153	63			90		
50-54	1,227	574	101	441	653	136	421
55-59	1,197	550	93	414	647	173	333
60-64	1,002	401	59	297	601	151	297
65-69	824	295	40	210	529	134	193
70-74	627	225	25	142	402	89	120
75 and over	810	267	25	123	543	128	87

Age-group	MALE		FEMALE	
	Parish Sample	Calton Ward	Parish Sample	Calton Ward
60-64			9	601
65-69	4	295	15	529
70-74	8	225	19	402
75 and over	19	267	44	543
	<u>31</u>	<u>787</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>2,075</u>

CHAPTER 2

CONSIDERATION OF THE HYPOTHESES IN THE LIGHT OF RELEVANT RESEARCH LITERATURE

A great deal of research has been done in this country and others on the medical and sociological aspects of aging, but in the information available to the writer the subject of the religious attitudes of the elderly has received far more attention in the United States. This explains why there is a very considerable body of information on research done in the United States in the pages of this chapter. The writer considered that the most effective way to present the research from other sources was to follow the division of the three main hypotheses into appropriate sub-hypotheses, and relate the research directly to the main objectives of this work. In some cases it is directly relevant and in others it is helpful and informative to the subject under discussion.

The First Main Hypothesis to be tested is as follows:-

"That people become more religious when they are elderly". It should be noted that 'religious' in this context refers to Church affiliation and attendance at worship, participation in church activities and personal devotional life with due consideration for those who are invalid or incapacitated in their homes.

It has often been assumed that elderly people turn to religion or religious practices as they get older because they think more deeply about the end of their life and future destiny. For the greater part of their life they have innumerable interests and concerns that give them little opportunity to reflect upon the

meaning and purpose of life and its end. But set against this is the fact that for many of the elderly, and particularly in Scotland, regular Church-going was experienced from their younger days by parental example and discipline. This was an accepted social tradition when the Church made a considerable appeal through preaching, and the family found itself in the majority of cases with some effective link with the Church through its various organisations, particularly concerned with the training of the young.

However the point must be raised as to whether we can assume that people who were brought up in the Church during youth continued with their religious affiliation as they grew older, and in particular when they left the family circle through marriage or employment. Further did they continue their connection with the Church in the vastly different atmosphere of attitudes and life-style following the 1st World War? This would have particular reference to the men who served in the Great War and returned home with very different outlooks on life, society and religion. Even if the hypothesis on investigation was seriously questioned as to its validity, it would not necessarily follow that a generation which was largely brought up within the Church's life from its youth would continue to maintain its association throughout adult life.

This particular hypothesis has been tested in numerous American research projects which indicate that there is no evidence of a large-scale 'turning to religion' by people as they grow older. Dr. Nila K. Covalt¹ on the basis of her medical practice at the

1. Covalt, N.K., "The meaning of Religion to Older People", article in Organized Religion and the Older Person, Scudder, D.L. (edit.), (University of Florida Press, 1958).

Kirkpatrick Memorial Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation in Winter Park, Florida, stated that she found no evidence to support the common assumption that people turn to religion as they grow older. She felt that the attitude of most older people about religion is more often that with which they grew up or which they accepted as they achieved maturity. Patterns of worship and of church attendance have remained much the same or modified by individual circumstances. She thought that several years ago it was possible that an older person might have joined a Church late in life for 'fire insurance', but she concluded that the older person who joins a Church for the first time or returns to Church because he is growing older would be a definite minority.

In this particular research we have examined the term 'religious' in relation to church attendance, activities within the organisational structure of the Church, and belief as it affects 'the last things'. Our consideration of relevant literature will follow the grouping of sub-hypotheses within the 3 main hypotheses.

(a) Examination of research literature in relation to the religiosity of the elderly, and the concept of disengagement.

The first sub-hypothesis is as follows:

"That the elderly, if physically able, go to Church (in respect of worship attendance and church activities) more regularly than when young or in later years".

M. Argyle¹ drew the conclusion that as people get older they increasingly take part in religious practices which have long been

1. Argyle, M., Religious Behaviour (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

habitual, and in belief are mainly concerned with the central facts of God and the after-life. So in this case 'more religious' means that belief in God and an after-life increased, but belief in specific Christian doctrine declined or was not considered important. It was found that belief in an after-life did not necessarily include a favourable attitude towards the Church or an engagement in religious practices. Questions of belief will be taken up in the third hypothesis, and his conclusion that while many people have a fear of death they still hope that death is not the complete end will be given further examination. From the American point of view, R.J. Havighurst and R. Albrecht¹ found little if any change of interest in the Church with advancing years. The Church held the interest of most of the people who were active members in their middle years, and they thought it increased its drawing power slightly on people as they grew older. They concluded that there is no evidence of a large-scale 'turning to religion' of people as they grow older, and the evidence suggests that most people carry on the religious habits of their middle years. In contrast, a nation-wide survey of the urban aged in the USA (1952-3) showed that $\frac{1}{2}$ of the respondents indicated no change in attendance at religious services (in answer to the question: "Do you attend services more or less often than when you were 50 years?"); while of the remainder the change in attendance was in the direction of less rather than more attendance, roughly 3 to 2. A study of a Roman Catholic parish showed the same trend even with respondents mainly female.

1. Havighurst, R.J. and Albrecht, R., Older People (Longmans Green, New York, 1953).

However the strongest criticism of the assertion that older people are more religious than others and that there is a turning to religion in old age comes from H.L. Orbach.¹ He made a careful analysis of 5 probability samples of 6,911 adults aged 21 and over who resided in the mid-1950's in the Detroit Metropolitan area. Church attendance on a 5-point scale from once a week to never was related to age in 5-year intervals. Age was found to be unrelated to changes in church attendance, and there was no indication of an increase in attendance in the later years. When the data was grouped into 4 age categories (21-39, 40-59, 60-74, 75 and over), the most striking finding was the constancy of attendance in all age groupings, with the one exception of significantly increased non-attendance among the oldest group, which can be attributed at least partly to the effect of age on physical health. For after all these were generally accept D.O. Moberg² concludes that the bulk of reliable evidence indicates that church attendance generally remains fairly constant but tends to decline in the later years compared with younger ages. However there are other ways of interpreting religiosity outside church attendance, and while it may be a most crucial and sensitive indicator of it there still remains such further areas of enquiry like personal devotional life and of course religious belief.

1. Orbach, H.L., "Aging and Religion: church attendance in the Detroit Metropolitan area", Geriatrics, 1961, 16, pp. 530-40.

2. Moberg, D.O. and Gray, R.M., The Church and the Older Person (Wm. B. Eerdmans, Michigan, 1962). See also Moberg, D.O. and Taves, M.J., "Church participation and adjustment in old age", article in Older People and their Social World, Rose, A.M. and Peterson, W.A. (edit.) F.A. Davis, Philadelphia, 1965).

2. Cumming, E. "Further thoughts on the Theory of Disengagement", International Social Science Journal, XV No. 3, p. 377.

Before we leave this section some reference must be made to the work of E. Cumming and W.E. Henry.¹ It is evident that as people get older more are found to be infirm, fewer are employed and, in general, fewer have a large range of activities. Some researchers have read more into the decline of activity than just infirmity. Some have used the concept of "desocialization" to describe the social and psychological changes of old age, while Cumming and Henry have developed the concept of 'disengagement'. They were not saying that, as people get older, they are gradually separated from their associations and their social functions. Or that, as people become physically feebler or chronically ill, they are thereby forced to abandon their associations or social functions. Or even that because older people tend to have a reduced income they can no longer afford to participate in fewer activities. For after all these were generally accepted to be a fact and had been stated many times before. The Cumming and Henry theory of disengagement is that individual and society prepare in advance for the ultimate disengagement of disease and death by "an inevitable, gradual, and mutually satisfying process of disengagement". Thus "normal aging is a mutual withdrawal or disengagement between the aging person and others in the social system to which he belongs - a withdrawal initiated by the individual himself, or by others in the system".² The individual 'prepares' for death and tends to disengage. Not only does he become preoccupied with himself and less concerned with others around him,

1. Cumming, E. and Henry, W.E., Growing Old (Basic Books Inc., New York, 1961).

2. Cumming, E. "Further thoughts on the Theory of Disengagement", International Social Science Journal, XV No.3, p. 377.

but society withdraws its integrating pressures. Roles are given up, social relationships are restricted, and there is less commitment to social norms and values. Disengagement and preparation for death suggest an "ultimate biological basis for a reduction of interest or involvement in the environment."¹

The main lines of criticism have questioned the process of disengagement, holding that not only is it not inevitable but that non-engagement in the later years is really a continuation of a life-long social-psychological characteristic of some people. Instead of withdrawal being inescapable for the older person, there is a great deal of evidence that they move from disengagement from the concerns more natural to younger people to engagement with other matters which are conducive to their style of living and aspirations. Further criticism has challenged the judgment that disengagement is desirable for older people, and it has been shown that those who have moved to engagement with other concerns are generally the happiest and have the greatest satisfaction. Others, while recognizing the force of the theory - because the departure of children from the home, retirement, and bereavement are characteristic experiences of later years, have questioned what evidence there is of increasing isolation in old age, and of decreasing emotional investment in individuals and groups with whom the elderly have relationships? However in the conclusions of Cumming and Henry, in the section

1. Ibid., p. 379. Growing Old, pp. 91-4.

entitled "Religious Piety",¹ there is the application to religious matters which states that "Religious Piety and Religious attendance show some decrease with age and are in this respect consonant with the disengagement theory". By way of explanation it should be added that those scoring high figures in the Religious Piety score (from a battery of questions about religious beliefs and practices) are concerned in their religious beliefs with man's relationship to God, with sin and redemption, and the possibility of life after death. While those scoring low see religion more in terms of social interaction, an integrative experience, and belief fundamentally concerned with the brotherhood of man. Disbelief in the life after death cut down the score also. Regarding church attendance their research indicated that the percentage attending Church frequently decreases in extreme old age, although they found it hard to decide whether this difference would disappear if all the oldest respondents had been equally competent physically. Among the women, they found that the highest attendance coincided with the age at which religious piety was highest. They added that this was not true of the men, and concluded that religion - traditionally a female pre-occupation, is a more sensitive area for women in western society.

While one would expect that church attendance should show some signs of decreasing numbers in extreme old age, and with this certain church practices; it does not follow that disengagement is inevitable, or that it affects piety or belief. Just as it has

1. Cumming and Henry, Growing Old, pp. 91-4.

been argued that with re-engagement people lose certain social roles with advancing old age only to assume new roles which are peculiar to older people, so in the Church's life there is evidence to show that many elderly people have the interest and the time to participate in attendance or activities that were denied them previously. The case of the widow or retired male are examples where there is re-engagement, and it is particularly noticeable in the work of certain organisations and in the official leadership of the Church. In fact both disengagement from and re-engagement with religion are typical in old age, and available research strongly suggests that there is a pronounced increase, in depth and certainty, of religious attitudes - linked with man's relationship to God, feelings and belief (particularly in the after-life) in later years.

(b) Examination of research literature in relation to the devotional life of the elderly

The second sub-hypothesis to be examined in the light of research literature is as follows:- "That the majority of the Elderly maintain a devotional life with prayer and Bible-reading".

In connection with the prayer habits of older people, G. Gorer¹ reported an increase from 35% to 75% in his survey of respondents from 30 to 70 years of age. While American studies like Cavan² show

1. Gorer, G., Exploring English Character (The Cresset Press, 1955).
2. Cavan, R.S., in conjunction with Burgess, E.W., Havighurst, R.J., and Goldhamer, H., Personal Adjustment in Old Age (Scientific Research Association, Chicago, 1949).

1. "Religion in Britain and Northern Ireland - a survey of popular attitudes" (Independent Television Authority, 1970).

a steady increase in Bible reading for both men and women over 60 years, a nation-wide survey of the urban aged in the USA (1952-3) referred to above found that the Bible was a relatively insignificant part of the reading material of older urban Americans. It actually came last on the list and only 17% said they usually read the Bible. Public opinion poll data (USA) indicate consistently higher figures for prayer and Bible reading among persons aged 50 years and over compared with younger groups. The conclusion of most American research on this theme states that although church attendance tends at most to remain constant with increasing age in cross-sectional studies of the population, the habit of regular prayer and reading from the Bible at least weekly have been found to increase among the elderly with advancing age.

(c) Results of a Television survey on the interest of the elderly in religious programmes

The third sub-hypothesis is "That the elderly have a special interest in Radio/Television religious programmes".

The Independent Television Authority commissioned a survey by the Opinion Research Centre during 1968-69¹ on popular attitudes towards Religion in Britain and Northern Ireland. They reached the conclusion:

"The real audience for present religious television is composed in Britain predominantly of the more pious and elderly female viewer. It has been shown that the young and the uncommitted turn away from much of the output because it is too closely associated - rightly or wrongly - with traditional religious practices.... It has also been

1. "Religion in Britain and Northern Ireland - a survey of popular attitudes" (Independent Television Authority, 1970).

2. Ibid., p. 40.

shown that people conceive the real motive of religious broadcasting to be to make people stop and think, to relate religious principles to everyday practice, to increase tolerance and understanding."¹

In order to discover how many viewers pay attention to religious programmes, they asked the sample (a representative random sample of 1,071 adults throughout Britain, and in N. Ireland of 694 adults) if they switched off the set or turned to a different programme when a religious programme appeared. Those who continued to view showed a high percentage in the 55-64 and 65+ age groups with little difference between the two groups, and a definite female preponderance in the figures. The second question was directed towards more purposeful viewing and asked the respondents if they definitely switched on their sets to view religious programmes. The age-groups mentioned above showed the highest percentage figures, but not to the same extent as before. So the results for the 55-64 age group were 48% compared to 71% for the previous question, and in the case of the 65 and over group were 47% compared to 69%.² It would appear that - even taking the replies at face value - only about one viewer in two who is watching religious television is paying attention and could be said to be interested in the programme.

"Songs of Praise" is listed in this way as the religious programme most often seen by viewers (35% of viewers) which is confirmed in the present study as well as being generally accepted as a favourite for older age-groups. Although Sunday Services and Epilogues only account for 16% and 8% respectively, it is reasonable to estimate that at least a minority will be regular viewers who for

1. Ibid., p. 50.

2. Ibid., p. 40. *The Family Life of Old People* (Routledge and Kegan

one reason or another are house-bound and prevented from attending Church. The elderly house-bound are particularly thankful for religious broadcasting and this certainly meets a very special need in our times. But having said that, the survey still makes the point that when people are facing problems they seek advice from experts or those who have themselves faced such problems.

"Church services, hymn singing and prayers are of little help to people in need and the advice of the clergy will help only the most religious elements of the population - and, even then, only a minority of that segment." 1

(d) Examination of research literature regarding the visitation of the elderly

The fourth sub-hypothesis is "That the elderly have regular visits from Family, Friends, Young People and the Church".

In considering research that forms a background to the sub-hypothesis examined here there is a large body of evidence that most old people, irrespective of class, are not isolated from their families. There are many who loudly voice the charge that young people neglect their old parents, but there is very little evidence for this sweeping generalisation.

P. Townsend's study in Bethnal Green dealt with the structure of family life in relation to old people,² and he found that the extended family was adjusting to new circumstances and not disintegrating. While old people often lived with relatives they preferred a 'supported' independence.

"To the old person as much as to the young (the family) seems to be the supreme comfort and support. Its central purpose

1. Ibid., p. 47.

2. Townsend, P., The Family Life of Old People (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957).

is as strong as ever. It continues to provide a natural, if conservative, means of self-fulfilment and expression, as the individual moves from the first to the third generation, performing and teaching the functions of child, parent and grandparent." 1

Further he writes:

"We found old people getting a great deal of help, regularly and in emergencies, from their female relatives, particularly their daughters, living in neighbouring streets. The remarkable thing was how often this help was reciprocated - through provision of mid-day meals, care of grandchildren, and other services. The major function of the grandparent is perhaps the most important fact to emerge from this book." 2

It is also true that the family plays a positive role for many old people who are inform and incapacitated. There is little evidence of health and welfare services being abused or 'undermining' family responsibilities. Those who benefit from the services are mainly the infirm or incapacitated who lack a family or have none within reach. It is estimated that over four times as many bed-ridden or severely incapacitated old people live at home compared to the number in Homes or Institutions. Most of them live with members of their families and are cared for by them. So although the nature of the care provided by relatives varies in quality, the evidence shows that in illness and infirmity the role of the family in providing personal and household care for the elderly is far beyond anything that the social services can or does provide.

In a further, more recent study, of elderly people in Britain, Denmark and the United States,³ an investigation was carried out into

1. Ibid., p. 234.

2. Ibid., pp. 227-8.

3. Shanas, E., Townsend, P., Wedderburn, D., Friis, H., Milhøj, P., Stehouwer, J., Old People in 3 Industrial Societies (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968).

the class differences in the patterns of family contact. The question was examined whether middle class old people were less likely than working class elderly to see their families and relatives as often as every week? Also whether there was any difference between men and women in their pattern of family contacts. It was discovered that a very small proportion of old people, about one in a hundred in Denmark and in the US and three in a hundred in Britain, have neither children, nor brothers and sisters, nor other relatives. However in all 3 countries a substantial group of all old people - 17% in Denmark, 16% in Britain, and 14% in the US - saw neither children nor relatives during the week preceding their interviews. As far as class differences are concerned - which are most obvious in Britain, it was old people from a 'white collar' background, both men and women, who were more likely to have seen neither children nor relatives during the past week. Frequent contact with children and relatives is most common among the working class in Britain, and it was actually found that persons of 'white collar' background were reluctant to report this lack of contact for fairly obvious reasons.

It was not surprising to find that, in every country, women were more likely than men to have seen their children and relatives during the past week. This was not only because they are more likely to be widowed and to live with children in many cases, but also they are more likely than men to share a home with relatives, particularly brothers and sisters. Also women in every social class in Britain are more likely than men to receive help from children or relatives. There are no major class differences in the proportion of women

who receive help from children, but there are class differences in the proportion of men who receive such help. In Britain (and also the U.S.) middle-class men are the least likely of all men to report that they had help from children.

Turning back to Townsend's study in Bethnal Green, he found that the ties of friendship, neighbourliness, club, and church membership were neither so enduring nor so indissoluble as family connections.

"Most people were very restrained in their relationships with neighbours; not many had even one close friend outside the family...moreover, in old age non-family activities diminished." ¹

As far as the Church was concerned, only 13% of his study said they went to Church as much as once a month. Most of these were people belonging to denominations other than the Church of England. Widows without children and spinsters were the most frequent attenders, and for some women it seemed that churchgoing was a consolation for a solitary and lonely life. Few men, and few married women, went to Church at all.

While visits from the family in the Bethnal Green study were particularly frequent, the conclusion Townsend draws from the situation of the elderly in residential Homes and Institutions was different.² He summarises the effects upon old people of living in Homes and Institutions in terms of isolation from family, friends and

1. Townsend, Family Life of Old People, p. 152.

2. Townsend, P., The Last Refuge: A survey of Residential Institutions and Homes for the Aged in England and Wales (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962).

community by saying:

"In general, there is a marked falling off in the social contacts which old people enjoy - variously attributable to the distances, both geographical and social, which now separate them from their homes or relatives, to their infirmity and to lack of facilities and the comparative inflexibility of the routine followed in the Homes. A large proportion are never visited by anyone and another large proportion do not have as much as one visit a week from either relatives or friends." 1

In the research of J. Tunstall² in his four area survey, it was shown that only about 1% of all old people and 2% of the socially isolated had a voluntary visitor in one particular week. This study was a follow-up piece of research to the cross-national study mentioned above, and concentrated upon the problems of the elderly who were living alone or considered socially isolated. This finding is in contrast to the fact that in his investigation only 7% of those with living children had no contact at all with the children or children-in-law in the last month of the survey. With similar findings compared to the Townsend research he showed that the majority of the socially isolated who had been visited by a minister or vicar in the previous week were actually those who engaged in church activity or attended worship. In fact only 1% of non-church-going elderly people saw a minister in the previous week of the survey, and no isolated old people at all. He draws the conclusion that:

"The clergy, on the evidence of the four-area survey, do very little visiting - apart from visiting some old people who still regularly attend church. There is also little sign of the clergy detecting need among old people and alerting the social services. For instance, of old people receiving the

1. Ibid., p. 369.

2. Tunstall, J., Old and Alone (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).

meals-on-wheels service only 2% of the recommendations for the service came from clergy." 1

This apparent ministerial neglect in visiting the elderly is again taken up in a study of the voluntary visiting programme of the Old People's Welfare Association in Hornchurch, Essex, by an American social worker.² Local doctors as well as the Association were criticised for lack of communication and effective visitation, but ministers and clergy received the most scathing criticism. Respondents who almost all mentioned prayer as a way to start or end the day, spoke in tones of betrayal as well as neglect. It is of interest to mention one case as follows:

"He came the morning my husband was buried. He stood in the door and said he would come in a week's time. He has never been back since."

(e) Examination of research literature on the effect of loneliness in the elderly

The fifth sub-hypothesis is "That the elderly feel more contented and less isolated as they grow older."

The principal subject of research which forms a background to this question is the investigation into loneliness as it affects the Elderly. The stereotype of a gloomy and isolated existence in old age is an exaggerated picture, but it is evident from research in different countries that a substantial minority of the elderly experience some degree of loneliness. It has been defined as "an unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship",³ but loneliness

1. Ibid., pp. 288-9.

2. Baran, S. "A Friendly Chat is not enough", New Society, 25th February, 1965.

3. Shanas and contributors, Old People in 3 Industrial Societies, p. 269.

is not just being isolated and it means many things to different people. We have known older people who have been lifetime 'loners' who are quite happy to live by themselves with a contentment in their own routine. Others may have loneliness thrust upon them either as the natural result of a lifetime of alienating people who now no longer need them, or as a consequence of physical ill-health which reduces mobility or often poverty. Then there are some people who suffer from a depressive illness in which they despair of life and cut themselves off from others and yet consider this in terms of loneliness.

But who are the people who feel lonely? In the cross-national survey mentioned above it was found first, that significantly more widowed and single persons say they are lonely and this remains true of single and widowed persons who live alone. Secondly, a significantly larger proportion of those who have been widowed recently, as compared to those widowed several years ago, feel lonely. Thirdly, many isolated people do not feel lonely and some in regular contact with people do feel lonely. Again it is stressed that isolation and loneliness are not coincident, and this is advanced as one of the most important findings of the survey. Here the work of J.H. Sheldon¹ is quoted as confirming the results of this study. Sheldon showed that among old people in the town of Wolverhampton the lonely tended to be the widowed and single people, living alone, in their 80's rather than in their 60's, and relatively infirm. But he further stated that not all the people in these conditions were lonely, and he concluded:

1. Sheldon, J.H., The Social Medicine of Old Age (Oxford University Press, 1948).

"Loneliness cannot be regarded as the simple direct result of social circumstances, but is rather an individual response to an external situation to which other old people may react quite differently." 1

Townsend in his study at Bethnal Green had found that the elderly in greatest need were without an active family life. While many denied that they were lonely they proved to have the fewest resources in time of need. So he made the distinction between isolation and desolation, and suggested that desolation was the fundamental cause of loneliness in old age, especially where this involved the loss of someone who is loved. Further there is evidence not only that the recently widowed are much more likely to be extremely lonely, but also persons whose children die or who have become separated from their children and detached in other ways from their social circle. It must be added too that more old people who are incapacitated are lonely. This finds confirmation in the study by Tunstall mentioned above, where he states the strong connection between loneliness and widowhood and also physical incapacity.

In summarising the effects upon old people of living in Homes and Institutions, Townsend found that nearly a half of the new residents surveyed said that they were often or sometimes lonely. He goes on to conclude:

"Although much of the prevailing loneliness seems to be attributable to recent bereavement, to infirmity, and to the loss of home and possessions, there is reason for supposing that it is sometimes reinforced by the short-comings of institutional life." 2

1. Ibid., p. 130.

2. Townsend, The Last Refuge, p. 369.

Although bereavement is the most important isolating experience in old age, it must be added that once the person overcomes the initial grief, then compensating relationships provided by family and friends may gradually mitigate the sense of loneliness. The importance of religious faith cannot be denied in this connection, and in a survey conducted in Torquay (1956) - which examined the efforts of religious organisations to care for elderly people in need, several of the people interviewed said that, because of their faith, they never felt lonely. It gave them a purpose in life, and gradually brought them back into touch with other people. One lady thought that the answer to loneliness among older people was to find the means of "escaping from the prison-house of one's own thoughts", and she found an opportunity of helping others even though, recovering herself from illness, she was unable to go out of her own house. It is believed that of the minimum of 20% of all older people who are members of churches in Torquay it is unlikely that any will slip into oblivion when they can no longer attend services or meetings. It was estimated that someone will visit them, possibly fortnightly if they are handicapped, and more often when there is serious need. It was admitted that the contribution which Church members make to discovering the existence of lonely people in the population can unfortunately only be assumed to be slight. But it seemed to the investigators that the major part which the Church plays is to meet one of the most important needs of old age - and one which few other agencies can meet with the same gifts - by giving a sense of sharing and playing a part in something that matters for others, and of having a real purposeful life.

The Second Main Hypothesis to be tested is as follows:

"That religious faith plays an important part in the personal adjustment of the elderly". 'Adjustment' in this connection has reference to personal crisis history, which, in the majority of cases tested, involves bereavement and retirement. The sub-hypotheses examine how far the Church provides a major support in personal crisis history, and also how far church members are successful in making adjustment to such crisis situations.

(a) Introductory remarks on the crises of Bereavement and Retirement

The typical crises of old age are widowhood or the loss of other intimates, ill health, retirement and loss of income. Widowhood happens mainly to older women, and it often produces social isolation and loneliness. Even women who had an unhappy married life still seem to experience a stunning shock. Many women have weakened themselves in nursing their sick husbands, so widowhood may find them physically exhausted, living alone and in social isolation for the first time. Many of them have a sharply reduced income as well.

Retirement does not occur quite so rigidly at age 65 years as is sometimes thought. Nevertheless it does come sharply for most individuals, and comparatively few people retain much social contact with former work fellows. The widely-held view that old people should keep on working does not always take into account the point that many men who work after 65 are doing less skilled work and are lower paid than previously. At retirement some people experience social isolation for the first time - especially the widowed and the

single. Since women predominate among both these groups, attention must be paid to retirement, not only among older men, but among women. Loss of income is one of the biggest changes precipitated by retirement. In fact old people are predisposed to both poverty and social isolation by being in one or more of the following categories: single and widowed women, those aged over 70, and those retired from work.

Ill health may also accompany the other crisis. The physically incapacitated and housebound tend to express feelings of loneliness. One in six of all housebound old people live alone, and they are more likely to go into Hospitals, Homes or mental institutions at a later period.

(b) Examination of research literature dealing with grief reactions in bereavement

As already indicated, our present research concentrated on the crises of bereavement and retirement, and so it has been necessary to examine relevant research in these fields. A recently published study by C.M. Parkes¹ was based on research projects in the London area, and it was undertaken with the intention of establishing a picture of 'normal grief' among young and middle-aged widows. Older widows were excluded because "there is reason to regard grief in old age as a rather different phenomenon from the grief of younger people".² From his own observations older people seem to show less

1. Parkes, C.M., Bereavement (Studies of grief in adult life), (Tavistock Publications, 1972).

2. Ibid., p. 25.

severe emotional reaction; that is to say, the acute emotional symptoms of grief are less pronounced because they have at least some expectation that their husband is going to die. There is a great difference obviously between the quiet slipping-away of an old man and the tragic cutting-off of a young one 'in his prime'. So this seems to be reflected in the reactions to bereavement of those who survive.

In his study of the consultations that 44 London widows had with their general practitioners he found that:

"whereas widows under the age of 65 frequently consulted their GP for help with emotional problems during the first 6 months after bereavement, this was not the case with older widows. Furthermore, the consumption of sedative drugs was no higher among the older widows after bereavement than it had been beforehand, whereas there was a sevenfold increase in sedative consumption in the under-65 age-group during the first six months of bereavement, which declined only slightly over the following year." 1

He goes on to say that consultations for physical symptoms increased in all age-groups, including the elderly, most notably from arthritis and rheumatic conditions. It seems likely that the bereavement did not originate the condition but aggravated one that was already present. It is possible too that the widows were using their arthritis as an excuse to visit their doctor and that the higher consultation rate reflected a need for help which had little to do with their physical state. So in the case of the elderly - who are less likely to consult their doctor on emotional problems, where the arthritis and the bereavement come together and produce

1. Ibid., pp. 128-9.

a situation too much for them to bear, then they may at this point seek help.

He has two references to specific works dealing with grief reactions in later life. In the first¹ the researchers describe the reactions to bereavement of 24 bereaved women and 1 bereaved man between 53 and 70 years of age who attended the Old Age Counselling Service at McGill University, Montreal. There they found "a dearth of overt mental manifestations of grief", although another study² which examined 184 psychiatric patients over the age of 60 with mental disorders, found that the incidence of bereavement as a precipitant was higher in those whose first attack of the illness occurred when they were over the age of 60 than in those who had had attacks at a younger age. Of course it could be explained that bereavements become more frequent as people get older, but even then the instigators reported that in this age-group the emotional disturbance of the illness "went far beyond any reaction that could be regarded as normal to the relevant misfortune."

Research has also investigated the increase in the death rate among widowers during the first six months of bereavement. The work of M. Young, B. Benjamin, and C. Wallis³ was supplemented by

1. Stern, K., Williams, G.M. and Prados, M. "Grief reactions in later life", Amer. J. Psychiat. 108, p. 289.
2. Kay, D.W., Roth, M. and Hopkins, B. "Aetiological factors in the causation of Affective disorders in old age", J. ment. Sci., 101, p. 302.
3. Young, M., Benjamin, B. and Wallis, C., "Mortality of widowers", Lancet (2), p. 454.



C.M. Parkes, B. Benjamin, and R.G. Fitzgerald,¹ and in the latter study it was found that of nearly 5000 widowers one in 20 died within 6 months of the death of their wives, and that nearly half these deaths were from heart disease. This confirmed the earlier study that bereaved men were more likely to die in the first 6 months after being widowed than were married men of their age.

Also C.M. Parkes shows in his study of grief reactions that very vivid delusions of the presence of the dead are frequent during the period of mourning.

"A 'sense of the continued presence of the deceased', 'a clear visual memory of him', and 'preoccupation with thoughts of him' were statistically associated; that is to say, widows with a strong sense of their husbands' presence also tended to recall him with great clarity and to be preoccupied with his memory. Confirmation of this evidence comes from W.D. Rees's² well-conducted study of 227 Welsh widows and 66 widowers of all ages. He found that 39% had a sense of the presence of the dead spouse and 14% experienced hallucinations or illusions of his or her presence from time to time." 3

He goes on to say that illusions and a sense of the dead spouse's presence were more common in those who were over 40 years, and who had been happily married with a period of bereavement of less than ten years. There was no relationship between the prevalence of illusions and religious faith.

Just as the present writer found instances of illusions or hallucinations reported in his case-interviews, it is also of

-
1. Parkes, C.M., Benjamin, B. and Fitzgerald, R.G., "Broken Heart - a statistical study of increased mortality among widowers", Brit. med. J. (1), p. 740.
 2. Rees, W.D., "The Hallucinatory and Paranormal reactions of bereavement", M.D. thesis, 1970.
 3. Parkes, Bereavement, p. 59.

interest to find C.M. Parkes mentioning that half the sample (of the London widows interviewed) reported dreaming of their husband after his death, and most of these dreams had a peculiarly vivid and realistic quality. In the main these dreams were happy dreams of interaction with the dead husband. But even here they contain intimations of the husband's death, and the reality always seems to assert itself. No matter how happy the dream there must always be a sad awakening to face reality.

(c) Examination of research literature on the support given to the bereaved

When we examine relevant research to determine the nature of the support given the bereaved by Family, Friends or Church, and the part played by personal faith, we find that C.M. Parkes previously quoted study concluded that a month after bereavement 13 widows out of 18 in his London study who expressed belief in God said that their faith had helped them. While there was some evidence that those whose religious beliefs helped them to cope with bereavement compared with those with no faith, yet several of the regular Church-goers did not come through this very well. The latter found it hard to maintain a belief in a God who loves, cares for, and protects His children in the light of their loss, and the hope of reunion with dear ones could not assuage the pain of their husband's absence. He comments in passing, that it was quite likely that several of the more religious widows were insecure personalities, and since such women tend to do badly after bereavement it is not wise to relate faith and regular church-going to successful adjustment as a general rule.

used I was not able to discover any actual research data on the support given to the bereaved in this study, although he states that "among the 22 London widows only 7 had been visited by a clergyman at the time of (his) first interview a month after bereavement".¹ Several, who had a close contact with their minister, found him a source of encouragement and support; although 2 who were lapsed Catholics found that the visit by an unknown priest to be less than helpful because "he did not understand their needs". He had the impression that a visit from the right clergyman at the right time would have been valued by all the respondents regardless of their Church affiliation or not.

In another study² it was found that relatives and close friends were the main source of support for the bereaved respondents. In this particular sample, covering 12 areas in England and Wales, of the people the respondents found most helpful in bereavement, 63% were Relatives and 13% covered Close Friends compared with scores of 3% for doctors and 2% for clergymen. In the case of those who expressed a religious faith, 92% in fact, $\frac{2}{3}$ said they felt it had helped them at the time of bereavement. Among those who said they belonged to the Church of England 62% said they found their faith helpful compared with 76% of the Roman Catholics and 79% of other Protestants. A third of all the bereaved persons had been visited at home by a clergyman since the death. Widows and daughters who

1. Ibid., p. 169.

2. Cartwright, A., Hockey, L. and Anderson, J.L., Life before Death, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973).

used to live with the person who died were visited most, but only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the widowers had been visited. "However, more of the bereaved had been visited at home after the death by a member of the clergy than any other 'professional', including their doctor."¹ They added that they were not sure whether the visit was made to offer comfort and help, or whether the visits were more official and concerned with funeral arrangements only.

(d) Examination of research literature regarding the adjustment made in retirement

Turning now to the crisis situation associated with Retirement, we find that a considerable amount of research has been done on the question of adjustment and adaptation. In his study of elderly folk in Bethnal Green, P. Townsend found that, excluding those manifestly sick or over 80 years, 50-55% of men who were retired from whole-time work might have been able - and many were keen, to continue working at a slower pace, but in point of fact "they had insufficient means of occupying their time, had no money, and were acutely aware of their loss of status."² A. Comfort³ stresses this point strongly when he says:

"It is a traditional practice in modern industry to dismiss its most experienced men. This is, in fact, the implication of the custom of compulsory retirement at a fixed age. The assumption behind it is twofold - that beyond the age of 65 many occupations become too 'heavy' for efficient performance by men who must also, in the nature of things, expect to ail

1. Ibid., p. 194.

2. Townsend, Family Life of Old People, p. 172.

3. Comfort, A., The Process of Ageing, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965).

more often than their juniors; and that in late life judgment and initiative are impaired. Both may in part be true,... but neither is fully justified by modern research in human ageing, and the wastage and personal frustration caused by the present convention are already in the view of many sociologists, a serious social evil." 1

It is not altogether surprising that there are contrary views, and, taking one example, B. Shenfield called for what she called a more realistic view.

"Ideas based on the assumption that there is a very large reserve of wasted labour among retired adults which could be used to add to the national wealth and reduce the pension's bill, die hard, as also does the unproven theory that work is 'good' for the old and postpones the process of aging. No longitudinal study following a cohort of older persons through the years immediately before and after retirement has proved any clear causal connection between prompt retirement and subsequent early death, nor that continued employment beyond pension age has any advantageous effect upon health. Such studies as have been made suggest that some people's health appears actually to improve after retirement." 2

In the cross-national study of three industrial societies,³ it was found that once men have retired they say that they miss nothing about their work as such. But quite obviously those who are relieved to be free of the pressures and stress of former occupations, must miss the income they received from working. However the study stresses that a man's health plays a major part in the formation of the attitudes expressed towards former work and retirement. In all countries investigated the retired men in poor health were both the least satisfied and the more likely to be nostalgic about their career

1. Ibid., pp. 114-5.

2. Shenfield, B., address at the 5th International Congress of Gerontology, (San Francisco, 1962).

3. Shanas and contributors, Old People in 3 Industrial Societies.

generally. It is not that they necessarily want to return to work, but they associate their period of working-life with a condition of better health and prospects. Some men would like to return to work or continue working, and they have reasonably good health and are prepared to do a job if they had the opportunity. Still it is suggested that men, who work for some years past the usual retirement age, may find a greater difficulty in accepting retirement when it comes eventually, and prove the least contented of all in the later stages.

We are aware of the difficulties which arise for the older workman if he is asked to learn new methods or new skills, and the need to work under pressure and speed makes things more difficult for him. In general, the effect of age on performance - physical strength apart, is towards working more slowly, but often more accurately. Elderly men often retain a high standard of craftsmanship provided that their vision and coordination remain intact. The use of judgment, experience and a lifetime's knowledge may give an elderly person an advantage over younger colleagues. But at the same time those getting older are less able to accept changes and to cope with them in modern conditions, and become less flexible and more rigid in their outlook. More work and research is being done on the special needs and problems of the older half of the work force - men and women between 40 and 65 years. In a labour force with about half the men older than 40 and with an increasing proportion of middle-aged women being re-employed after a lapse of agencies for old-age pensioners, and while the response has been good a great many people have been actively discouraged by the

time, the psychological changes associated with aging have become occupationally more important. But there has been little planning to meet this situation, for shop-floor workers have tended to drift to more menial jobs in less satisfactory working conditions and white-collar workers ran the risk of redundancy. The fact that they were often more conscientious, dependable and loyal, and in some jobs significantly better, was not apparently enough to counter-balance the difficulties of introducing older men and women into new jobs or new ways of doing old jobs. In a static, or slowly changing society, older people stayed in their position and aged contentedly, with experience and the wisdom of maturity more than making up for any loss of powers. Their assets outweighed their liabilities. In a period of flux and technical change the reverse applies; for their liabilities often outweighed their assets.

However there is evidence that industry and trade unions are beginning to recognise these facts, and in the motor industry (Jaguar works at Coventry) a scheme has been introduced to enable older men and women to reduce their workload and their earnings in the last years before retirement. As outlined at present (August, 1973) from the age of 63, men working on the production line would be able to opt for 80% of their normal output at 80% of their normal pay. In practice this would mean that they would work a six-hour day, five days a week. Similar proposals apply to women from the age of 58 years. Of course there are cases of special employment agencies for old-age pensioners, and while the response has been good a great many people have been actively discouraged by the

operation of the earnings rule. So it is not surprising that many have tried to seek part-time employment in the hope that their earnings will not bring a major deduction from their pensions.

The most important advance in recent years has been the recognition from industry and the community of the value of pre-retirement education. As we have recognised the problems for the individual could become considerable, for extension of the life span with earlier retirement will mean for many a period of retirement which may be as long as the period of work. So preparation for retirement is allied to the question of the best use of leisure and the availability of leisure activities. Pre-retirement courses for employees are now recognized as of value and a number of firms actually run their own schemes; and the pre-Retirement Association from its surveys in the past years has given a lead to many public bodies to take this matter very seriously, with an indication that pre-retirement education will need to become an active part of the working period, and start much earlier - even being included in the school curriculum. In this way it will be possible to study the process of aging and its consequences, and the community will be better prepared for the problems of later life.

A typical pre-retirement course would consider such subjects as Finance, where information and guidance are given on retirement pensions, supplementary benefits, budgeting on restricted income, and private saving and investment. Health includes the problems of physical health and personal adjustment in later years with a special emphasis on the avoidance of accidents. Under the same heading instruction can be given on the economic planning of meals

and economic cooking. Housing and living arrangements for the future is a vital topic when the special needs of the elderly in relation to size, location and furniture will be explained. The opportunities for paid employment or voluntary service can be considered, as well as leisure time activities. While this approach will prove of great value to many, it must be remembered that it will not be easy to communicate to others whose formal education was very limited and whose interests are confined to the television and the local public house. Many of the latter turn to part-time employment just to escape from sheer boredom, and a great deal of work remains to be done in seeking the right kind of approach for these cases. It has to be realised that in Britain many men see their period of retirement as a time when one rests after a life-time of work whereas the typical American reaction is to see it as a time for activity. It has been said that such 'activity' is so highly valued by older Americans that the leisure activities of retirement take on the aspects of work. Whatever may be the national characteristics in this matter, it still remains that adult education and preparation for retirement will become even more important in the future, and public bodies and voluntary associations will have a special part to play in making people more aware of the problems and the opportunities of early retirement.

1. Argyle, Religious Behaviour.

2. This refers to Cavan and contributors, Personal Adjustment in Old Age.

3. Ibid., pp. 152-3.

The Third Main Hypothesis to be tested is as follows:-

"That elderly members of the Church do not fear death, or the process of dying, and have a strong belief in an After-life, Judgment, and Eternal Punishment."

As the heart of Christian belief centres on the doctrine of the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, it would be a reasonable assumption to make that members of the Church, of all ages, have a belief in an After-life, and consequently face the fact of death with equanimity. The purpose of this section of the study is to examine this hypothesis in relation to the belief of the elderly church member, and examine the contrast, if any, in the attitude of the non-members who were interviewed.

(a) Examination of research literature relating to fear of death in the elderly

Certain research, in particular M. Argyle,¹ has suggested that a rise in religious belief is related to fear of death.

"It would be expected that people will be progressively more religious as they get older, with an increasing amount of religious activity from the age of 30 onwards. The index most affected by age is belief in an After-life, and 100% of people over 90 were certain of an after-life in one survey,² although not all expressed a favourable attitude towards religion, or engaged in religious practices. Similarly, the number of people who said they went to Church 'for reassurance of immortality' increased progressively after the age of 30. All this goes to confirm the view that the rise in religious belief after 30 is related to fear of death."³

1. Argyle, Religious Behaviour.

2. This refers to Cavan and contributors, Personal Adjustment in Old Age.

3. Ibid., pp. 152-3.

W.M. Swenson¹ in a comprehensive investigation of death attitudes in an aged sample (Minnesota, U.S.) found that death attitudes of a fearful or negative nature were not admitted by his sample. He felt that there is reason to believe that fear of death may well exist in an aged sample but is either not readily admitted to consciousness or not easily admitted through questionnaire responses. In fact the respondent either looks forward to death or tends to be evasive in his contemplation of the experience of death. He found a significant relationship between death attitudes and religiosity as measured by both religious activity and the MMPI religiosity scale (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory), a measure of devotion to religion. As he discovered that persons with more fundamental religious convictions and habits look forward to death more than those with less religious conviction, then fearful attitudes to death tend to be found in those persons with little religious belief and activity. He found also a significant relationship between domestic conditions and attitudes towards death. Persons residing in Homes for the aged had a more positive, forward-looking attitude compared with those who lived alone, the latter tending to evade issues related to death. Fear of death was found more often in those living alone than in those living with relatives or in Homes for the aged. There were two other characteristics which showed up less clearly, but still suggested significant relationships with attitudes toward death. Widowed persons passively evaded the

1. Swenson, W.M., "Attitudes towards death in an Aged Population", J. Geront., 1958, 16, pp. 49-52.

1. Feltz, R., The Meaning of Death, (McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., U.S., 1979).

issue of death, while single and married persons looked forward to death. Also persons who reported good health were most often actively evasive in considering death, while those reporting poor health most often looked forward to death positively. He concluded that as religion plays a very significant role in the aged person's attitude toward death, according to his investigations the eschatologically-oriented person contemplates death in a positive manner. The data suggested that solitary existence in old age is associated with a fearful contemplation of the experience of death.

Of course this does not necessarily prove that religious faith removes the fear of death. It can be argued that attitudes toward death of the religiously devout differ from the non-religious because of differences in their social support. In other words, that the religious have a support and security within their fellowship group that is not obvious with the non-religious; and Swenson's finding, mentioned above, that fear of death is related to a solitary existence supports this hypothesis.

As we said by way of introduction we would expect the faithful believer to be sure of his salvation and have no fear of death as a consequence. However H. Feifel¹ suggested that certain persons who fear death strongly may resort to a religious outlook in order to cope with their fears concerning death. It should be added that the sample investigated here consisted of a much younger group, yet according to his research the religious person here, when compared with the non-religious, was personally more afraid of death. For

1. Feifel, H., The Meaning of Death, (McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., U.S., 1959).

the non-religious individual the emphasis was on the discontinuance of life on earth, that is, what is left behind, rather than on what will happen after death. The data indicated that even the belief that one is going to Heaven was not sufficient to do away with the personal fear of death in some religious persons. This finding, he concluded, together with the strong fear of death expressed in the later years by a substantial number of religiously-inclined individuals, may well reflect a defensive use of religion by some subjects. Also in certain people, fear of the dying process may be more frightening than the idea of death itself, and a person's character structure may sometimes be more important than the death-threat stimulus itself in determining reactions to this event. When he concludes that death is not just a biological event, but the attitudes concerning it and its meaning for the individual can have an important effect on how he conducts his life, we can appreciate that if his hypothesis is verified, "then one of the social-psychological functions commonly attributed to religion by even the most faithful when they seek comfort in biblical teachings about the resurrection will have received some scientific support."¹

Before leaving this particular subject of investigation, mention should be made of the difficulties inherent in the technique of direct questioning on a person's attitude to death. Apart from the semantic factor involved in the differentiation between the words 'death' and 'dying', it must also be added that

1. Moberg, D.O., "Religiosity in Old Age", *Gerontologist*, 1965, 5 (2), p. 78. See also pp. 78-87, 111-12.

ward, D.B., "Social adjustment in extreme Old Age" (paper presented at the 1st Pan-American Congress on Gerontology, Mexico City, 1958).

denial has been shown to be a very important mechanism for dealing with anxiety in old age. A research group in an American geriatric hospital found that the mental mechanism of denial is among the most common adaptive techniques employed in personality adjustment by older persons. In particular where a gradual deterioration of the central nervous system, which causes reversal of the mental processes towards those of early childhood, then the denial mechanism of unacceptable reality situations is quite universally utilized. It is the feeling of such investigators that fear of death and illness plays an important part in the unconscious psychological life of the individual, and direct questioning on the topic of death may prove too threatening to aged or ill persons. It is certainly true that direct questioning on this subject must always be most carefully considered in the light of the person's background and condition, and no attempt should be made to press on with questioning when serious emotional reactions are suspected or encountered.

Although H. Feifel believed that answers to direct questions on death tap the conscious and social attitudes of the subjects rather than the deeper layers of personality, it is still true many old people are quite willing to speak freely on the topic. This was found to be true by B.B. Beard¹ in her study of centenarians who had "no morbid fears about death or any special reticence in discussing it". This also proved to be true for the present writer in the great majority of his interviews.

1. Beard, B.B., "Social adjustment in extreme Old Age" (paper presented at the 1st Pan-American Congress on Gerontology, Mexico City, 1958).

(b) Examination of research literature dealing with belief in an After-life

American research has shown that belief in life after death increases with age, and certainly a higher proportion of old people than of younger generations believe that there is a life after death. We have already mentioned the investigation of religious attitudes and personal adjustment at Prairie City, Middle West, USA,¹ where the replies to the question concerning certainty of an after-life ranged in the affirmative from 71% (60-64 yrs) to 100% (over 90 years). Also 90% of the older people believed that they would be united with their loved ones in a literal Heaven. So it was suggested that the Church serves to keep their faith alive and active and to prepare them for the transition from this world to the next. This high score of belief is also reported in an investigation of older people in Louisville (87% of whom were believers in this sense); and the significantly slightly lower scores are found in groups from the larger cities, where in one example a 76% was recorded regarding certainty in an After-life. But it should be mentioned that a study of a group of native-born old people in Chicago found that only 58% were sure of an After-life whereas 18% did not believe. It would appear that the smaller the community in rural areas, then, the higher is the percentage or proportion of belief in an after-life. Also that the religious feelings and beliefs of the elderly, in particular belief in an After-life, play a greater role and tend to increase as they get older.

1. Havighurst and Albrecht, Older People.

A British study¹ of people recently bereaved found that a half of the sample either did not believe in a future life or remained uncertain, while of those believing in a future life, 15% had little idea what it would be like and others voiced a series of unorthodox beliefs with no religious content. The pattern of disbelief was voiced more than twice as often by men as by women, who, however, had slightly more uncertainty, and more frequently by the young than the old. It is significant that the examples quoted of those who felt assured of Heaven and thought of it in scriptural terms were from Scotland. Many people felt strongly about the deceased who had passed to Heaven as 'watching over their loved ones' in this life, and this belief joined with the assurance of reunion with loved ones in Heaven was held by 17% of the women and 3% of the men. Then their view of life in Heaven was described as a vaguely blissful condition with some respondents stressing more positive features like beauty, rest, peace, and the absence of worries or evil. These views were held by 15% of the women and 7% of the men, and particularly by people of the upper middle-class or professional background. The only concept of the After-life which was advanced equally by both men and women were unorthodox beliefs like reincarnation, which accounted for 9% of both sexes. It should be added that in this study only 11 respondents out of 359 holding orthodox beliefs made some reference to Judgment, and not a single respondent voiced a belief in eternal damnation.

1. Gorer, G., Death, Grief and Mourning in Contemporary Britain, (The Cresset Press, 1965).

5. Gallup Poll printed in the Sunday Telegraph, May 13th, 1973, organised by Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd.

In a Dutch research study¹ the concept of judgment after death, was found to be very important. Many people expected to find a God who demanded an account of their lives after death, and who was expected to judge them accordingly. The writer saw this strand of belief - that we constantly stand under the judgment of God and are at all times responsible to Him, being projected to the end of life. So he came to the conclusion, based on his research, "that this 'projection' comes into being through a link-up of the fear of death with the notion of judgment".²

In the light of the above research very similar results are recorded by D. Martin³ who estimated that in England, where religious education has been the only compulsory curricular subject for a century, 50% of the population believe in the life to come. Other studies⁴ stated that one third of a 10% sample of the adult population of Dawley, Shropshire, believed firmly in life after death, and a recent Gallup Poll,⁵ carried out for the Sunday Telegraph in 1973, found a very similar result in 37% (compared with 38% in 1968), although 51% stated a belief in Heaven. The figure for a belief in Hell was 20% (compared with 23% in 1968), and whereas almost all the people who believed in Hell also believed in Heaven, of those who believed in Heaven only 37% believed in Hell. A

1. Faber, H., Pastoral Care in the Modern Hospital (S.C.M. Press, 1968).

2. Ibid., pp. 52-3.

3. Martin, D. in Mol, H. (edit.), Western Religion (Mouton, 1972).

4. Nelson, G. and Clews, R., A paper to the British Association, 1970.

5. Gallup Poll printed in the Sunday Telegraph, May 13th, 1973, organised by Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd.

report concerning the first findings of a survey being carried out among Roman Catholics in Rome by the social research centre of the Gregorian Papal University suggested that many of those who regularly attended mass did not believe in the eternal life and did not consider this illogical in the light of faith and the doctrines of the Church. Cardinal Angelo dell'Acqua, Vicar of Rome, said that many Roman Catholics in Rome did not believe in Paradise or Hell or even eternal life. "We do not talk about them, either because we do not even believe in them ourselves or because we are ashamed to do so."

However it still remains true that belief in an After-life is clearly evident in the older age-groups - whether in fact it increases with age or not, and in the I.T.A. survey in Britain and N. Ireland (1970) already referred to above, it was found that 79% of the respondents aged 65 years and over had a belief in a future life with very little difference in the results from a social class point of view. In fact in this survey there was no evidence of religious belief or attitude generally differing in any consistent way between middle class and working class people, although within such broad social classifications there were slight variations between their upper and lower segments.

Summary

This wide-ranging review of research literature has given some indication of the work done in the medical and sociological as well as the religious fields of investigation into the religiosity, crisis adaptability, and eschatological belief of the aged. We shall have occasion later to take up specific items of research already outlined and compare their conclusions with the main results of the present work. We now turn to the very important part of this thesis which examines Christian teaching and practice in the care of the elderly. The research work is presented in the context of this general theme in the hope that its results will be of some value in developing the practice of pastoral care and oversight of the elderly.

Scriptural Background

Family solidarity and concern for the elderly was a continuing theme in Israel's history and made clear in Covenant Law. However the life-situation of the elderly has varied from time to time and place to place, and community attitudes towards old age changed with varying social conditions. L. Simmons,¹ working on the role of the aged in primitive society, found that the elderly did least well in nomadic tribes wandering with their herds in search of feeding grounds. When resources of food and shelter were limited, unproductive and dependent elders became a heavy burden and those unable to move with the rest of the tribes might be abandoned

1. Simmons, L., Role of the Aged in Primitive Society (Yale University Press, 1965).

CHAPTER 3

CHRISTIAN TEACHING AND PRACTICE IN THE CARE OF THE ELDERLY

In this section we begin with a biblical survey and seek to develop a theological basis for the service that is offered to the elderly in Christ's name, bearing in mind the changing pattern of family and community life. In seeking guidance from biblical sources we find that the material is limited, in the sense that there are not many texts or passages in scripture which directly refer to the problems or situation of the elderly. When we put the scriptural material in its social as well as religious context, then it is possible to establish guide-lines for a theological understanding of pastoral care of the elderly in our modern society.

Scriptural Background

Family solidarity and concern for the elderly was a continuing theme in Israel's history and made clear in Covenant Law. However the life-situation of the elderly has varied from time to time and place to place, and community attitudes towards old age changed with varying social conditions. L. Simmons,¹ working on the role of the aged in primitive society, found that the elderly did least well in nomadic tribes wandering with their herds in search of feeding grounds. When resources of food and shelter were limited, unproductive and dependent elders became a heavy burden and those unable to move with the rest of the tribes might be abandoned

1. Simmons, L., Role of the Aged in Primitive Society (Yale University Press, 1945).

to starve. With settled tribes agriculturally employed having recognized property rights and sharing of resources, the old fared well and often became the recipients of special privileges denied to warriors. But it is significant that in Israel's history, from the earliest times of the nomadic wanderings in the wilderness of Sinai, the younger members of the tribes were commanded to act mercifully towards aged dependents. In this context the 5th commandment, "Honour your father and your mother" (Exod. Ch.20:12) arose out of the agenda of the nomadic times in the wilderness, and especially referred to the treatment of helpless aged dependents. They are not to be sent abroad to be eaten of beasts or to die of exposure, as was the custom in some societies. Family solidarity became one of the characteristics of Israel from an early time, and it was so much a part of the social texture of life that later it might seem that no special commandment was necessary to protect parents or the elderly. When the Decalogue was codified in more settled times, the normal unit of Israelite life was the clan which dwelt together on the inherited land and property. The aged parents lived here together with their adult children, that is with the sons and their dependents. This is the land referred to in the further words of the commandment, "...that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." But the commandment indicates that the possession of the land (of promise) which God gives to them is dependent upon the maintenance of family standards set down in the Covenant law.

G. Beer, clarifying the precise meaning of the verb 'honour', writes:

"The aged parents whose capacity for work and whose valuation has diminished (Lev. Ch.27:7) are not to be treated harshly by the Israelite; he is not to begrudge them the bread of charity, or force them to leave the house or take the way of voluntary death, or even to kill them himself". 1

In fact in the following words from the Book of Proverbs:

"He who does violence to his father and chases away his mother is a son who causes shame and brings reproach."

"If one curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in utter darkness,"

we are reminded by the scholars that the conjectured original form of the 5th commandment was "You shall not curse your father or your mother." In addition, Leviticus ch.19, gives an excellent summary of Israelite social legislation together with the motive behind it. There is instruction concerning gleanings - that the poor and the sojourner may get food; against stealing, false swearing, oppression; about wages, gossip, impartiality in court; and also honouring the aged. The reason for these specific regulations is given in W. 17-18: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart....Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; I am the Lord." The Israelite is commanded by God to love every member of his community, and he is to do so regardless of any attitude of love or hate exhibited toward himself. So covenant law establishes that before the divine Judge every member of the community has an equal status; and God's requirement of the people who acknowledge Him as their Lord is that they treat each other with a mutual respect and concern which transcend legal duty, but are rooted in the

1. Beer, G., Exodus (Tübingen University Press, 1939), p. 102.

recognition of their common Lord, who has made them members together in the covenant community.

It must be apparent to us in our own generation that the quality of life in any community is determined by the way the weakest, including the elderly, are treated. This is apparent in Israelite society as we have shown, but Israel learnt to go on to a deeper meaning, as is shown, for example, in the 3rd ch. of Ecclesiasticus. There it is indicated that blessings come to him who honours his father and mother, particularly in their old age (ch. 3:12ff.). The reward for such piety as is here commanded is a stable society in which health and long life can be enjoyed. As we have said, the possession of the land which God gives to His people depends upon the maintenance of family standards and true reverence for the elderly.

When we turn to the New Testament it is of interest to refer to a saying of Jesus at the end of chapter 12 of Matthew's Gospel (ch.12:46-50). It is the incident when the mother and brothers of Jesus came to see Him, and He made it clear to them that His true family are His disciples who do the will of God (and therefore for Matthew the members of the Christian community). This certainly did not mean that Jesus had no real concern for His family (for at the time of His death He entrusts the care of His mother to the disciple John; John ch.19:25-7); for indeed from the days of Nazareth He fulfilled His responsibilities as the eldest son following the assumed death of Joseph. But in this saying He is drawing out the implications of a loving care exercised on behalf of the larger family of God by His followers. In fact some scholars have seen the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke ch.15:11-32) as one

of a series of parables which suggest that Jesus saw His mission as an enactment of God's summons to old Israel to care for the out-cast, the under-privileged and the needy. In fact the special message of care for the needy which is introduced in the parable of the Last Judgment (Matt. ch.25:31-46) speaks of a service which is offered to Christ Himself. This affirms the ultimate importance of acts of love towards even "the least of Christ's brethren" (for whom the evangelist Matthew shows concern also in ch.18, vv.6-35), for this story is an eschatological vision which answers the question of how a man is to be judged on the final day of reckoning. Further the knowledge of who is really our neighbour in Luke's parable of the Good Samaritan (ch. 10:25-37), not only challenges man's prejudices and judgments, but leads directly to the call of need wherever it may be. In answer to the question, "And who is my neighbour?", Jesus shows that anyone needing aid is the proper object of neighbour-love. The life of Christ indicates quite clearly our responsibility for the family, both parents and dependents; but it has set before us the way Christ's love embraces all needy persons, and particularly the helpless, the unlovely, the lonely and the sick.

Examples of the care of the needy are found in the New Testament when, in Acts ch.6, we read of the nomination and ordination of the 7 Deacons to administer the common fund for the relief of the widow's and the needy. We find further references in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. ch.5) which refer to the charitable care of elderly and solitary women. In the light of the Parousia expectations and their gradual fading away in the understanding and experience of the Early Church, we can see that by the time of

the later writings of the New Testament questions concerning the care of the needy and the elderly are answered in more established social structures.

To continue this short review of the biblical material we would emphasise the nature of the authority exercised by the elderly in the biblical period (see Gen. ch.25:8, ch.50:22; Deut. ch.34:7, ch.32:7); the question of the meaning and value of life as seen in old age (for example Ecclesiastes ch.12:1-7); and the expression of Christian love as it is applied to the needs of the elderly (Acts ch.6:1-6; 1 Tim. ch.5:2,4).

(a) Authority exercised by the Elderly

When we consider the reverence and honour offered to the elderly by the Hebrew people throughout their history, there are references to the righteousness which was considered a corollary of the 'good old age' attributed to the Patriarchs (Gen. ch.25:8, ch.50:22; Deut. ch.34:7), and also to the way the aged were viewed as depositories of tested wisdom (Deut. ch.32:7). As their authority was considered as an expression of the divine will, it would certainly lead to a position of high honour and respect.

It is of interest to note that in the Biblical view, to die young was a misfortune and a catastrophe, and one of the most terrible curses that could be pronounced was that a man and his offspring should die young. It was said that the wicked died young, but a righteous man can hope to live out the full measure of his days (Psalm 102:24-5; Isaiah ch.38:10, ch.65:20; and Psalms 21:5, 61:7). Long life is represented as the reward of man's obedience

to God's laws (Prov. ch.4:10), and with advancing age a man gradually rose in his social position until he reached the coveted position of being one of the elders, who exercised civic and religious leadership. The most typical of the duties of the elders was to serve as judges, who sat at the gate and dispensed justice. So the words: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord" (Lev. ch.19:32), had a special meaning and application in Ancient Israel. But the Biblical idea of honouring the old and paying them respect in word, deed and behaviour, such as remaining standing and keeping quiet in their presence (Lev. ch.19:32; Job ch.32:4) continued for many generations, and this continued in many parts of Middle-Eastern society up to the present century. Since honouring the old was such an important socio-religious commandment, it is not surprising that its transgression was punished severely.

In the later epistles of the New Testament where we find the early Church set in the midst of a pagan environment, the elderly are offered the respect and reverence which is continuous with the Jewish tradition without the all-embracing patriarchal authority. It is significant that Timothy, the young pastor, is counselled by Paul the Apostle "never to be harsh with an older male member of the congregation" (1 Tim. ch.5:1). This is not just a question of the young minister showing Christian courtesy to an older member of his congregation, but also the recognition that the elderly have a positive contribution to make in the life of the congregation by virtue of their experience and example in the faith. 1 Timothy

also refers to the charitable care of elderly and solitary women (vv.5,9), and it appears that a roll of widows was kept, and thus that there was a fairly developed organization in existence. But the widow is supported by the Church where there is no family to help or when a non-Christian family was unwilling to support the widow. As she could not be put on the roll if under 60 years of age, then it is reasonable to assume that the number of enrolled widows cannot have been large, but it is no doubt assumed that family care should be recognized as something that God expects and approves. However much the younger generation of any age may question the status and authority of the elderly, we find that they are directed throughout the scriptures to support and reverence the elderly in their exercise of responsibilities in family and society.

(b) Meaning and Value of Life in Old Age

We must not assume that there was no awareness in Biblical times of the feebleness often accompanying old age. There are many biblical references like "an old man and full of years" (Gen. ch.25:8), or "old and heavy" (1 Sam. ch.4:18), or even "old and stricken in years" (1 Kings ch.1:1), which speak of the old and weak. It is not surprising that the Psalmist should cry out: "Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent. O God, from my youth Thou hast taught me, and I still proclaim Thy wondrous deeds; so even to old age and grey hairs, O God, do not forsake me." (Psalm 71:9,17-18). In a famous passage from Ecclesiastes (ch.12:1-7) old age is likened to a storm cloud veiling the horizon; sun, moon and stars are observed, but there is

no later clearing of the skies. There is the reference to failing faculties, and the weakness and frailty that attends old age. The sight fails, light burdens grow heavy, the back stoops and the old hands grope. The lamp of life has no longer any oil to feed it; its golden bowl is broken.

But for all this, feebleness in old age does not inevitably result in weariness of spirit. In Psalm 71, quoted above, we understand that the old man reflects on his experience of God as a blessing that has been lifelong, and there is a note of assurance that God will not dismiss him but the goodness and mercy of past years will abide to the end. The Apostle Paul can write, "Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day" (2 Cor. ch.4:16). The 'outer nature' or the 'outward man', the physical man that undergoes the wearing process of aging and continual stresses encountered in life, is always wasting away. Paul felt the drain on his physical vitality as he got older, but he stressed that the 'inner nature' or 'inward man', the redeemed and Spirit-inspired self, is being renewed every day in Christian discipleship. The thought behind this is not that there is a gradual and progressive growth in the inner spiritual life, but rather each new day his resources of faith and courage are so restored by God that he has adequate strength to meet the tests of life as he gets older.

There is no suggestion that spirituality automatically increases with age in the Biblical record. The evidence is rather that the individual must seek the renewing grace and power of God in his daily discipleship, and where this happens then the testimony

suggests that the faith, loyalty and will to serve at the highest level can be maintained through all ages. For all the deprivations that the elderly may suffer, the spiritual consolation is that old age can be a blessing from God and can result in spiritual growth and maturity. In this sense it is the crowning period of life, when man can demonstrate his faith and encourage others through difficult periods of life. As they come towards the end of their life, then they should be more emotionally and spiritually prepared for the fact of death in the assurances of the Faith concerning the after-life. If their faith is strong, then their influence here - particularly with younger age-groups, can be of inestimable value within the family and in congregational life.

Theological Basis

(a) A Theology of Aging - with special reference to S. Hiltner's theology of aging.

S. Hiltner¹ in a paper on this subject, presented to the 8th Annual Southern Conference on Gerontology at the University of Florida, considered the subject from the point of view of the meaning of the faith for the individual who has become elderly, and also an understanding of the aging process. A theology of aging is both a theology for older people and a theology for those preparing to be older. He deals with the subject by developing 3 cardinal points, namely, confrontation with the fact of loss in

1. Hiltner, S., "A Theology of Aging" in Scudder, D.L., (edit.), Organized Religion and the Older Person (University of Florida Press, 1958)

1. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

human relations, the seeking of fulfilment in life in the elderly years, and the adaptation of vocation and responsibility in older years.

He argues first that it is only possible to experience the real potentiality of older years when people have first faced and dealt directly with the fact of loss in their own situation. It is true that the elderly are most likely to experience loss at some time or another, and we would expect that their basic faith will prove a vital factor in facing the situation of bereavement. It is vital in the sense that they have the reassurance of their faith in the reality of the After-life and the knowledge that their loved ones have eternal rest, but also because it sustains them through the period of mourning when they must work through their grief and adapt themselves to a new way of life. The beatitude of Jesus, "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted" includes the necessity of mourning in order that the situation may be faced realistically and positively with an end in sight. Again it must be emphasized that the divine resources can be appropriated by the regular exercise of spiritual communion in prayer, and this aspect of the faith is fully borne out by the example of many elderly people.

The second point that Hiltner makes in developing a theology of aging is that there is joy in the fulfilment experienced in old age. "'The best is yet to be' can be stated honestly only by one who has first faced the fact of loss of powers, and has then altered the youthful values of the general culture away from mere expansion and in the direction of depth and intensity."¹ He underlines the

1. Ibid., p. 7.

point made that the values of our culture are associated with youth and that this derogates the very values that promise most to bring fulfilment in older years. It could also be said that the attitude of the community in terms of the 'Climax Structure' (representing the respect accorded by the community to the individual at various stages of life), as far as the Western civilization is concerned, reaches a peak in middle age. The high value which is nowadays placed on earning capacity and productivity leads to an under valuation of spiritual attainments and consequently of that time in life when production has passed its peak. It is interesting in this connection to note that in the description of climax structures by R. Métraux¹ in different cultures there is reference to Bali, where with its belief in reincarnation, the young and the old are held in the greatest veneration as being sacred and close to Heaven, and those of intermediate age being less highly regarded. Although it is said that younger people possess many rejecting attitudes toward older people, a great deal of what appears to be negative feeling toward older people is a symbolic attempt to deal with something about one's self. As Hiltner says, "Older people are not seen in their own terms but as reminders of one's own earthly destiny."² In this respect E.H. Erikson believes there is a connection between the low status of old persons in contemporary Western culture, and the lack of direction or sense of meaning that

1. Métraux, R., Neurologic and Psychiatric Aspects of the disorders of Aging (Ballière, Tindall and Cox, London, 1956)

2. Hiltner, Theology of Aging, p. 7.

affects adolescents. Unless the young have before them a personification of fulfilment in old age, then they have difficulty in developing a sense of purposeful sequence in the different phases during their lifetime.

In the light of this the Elderly are more likely to appreciate the sayings of Jesus, such as, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark ch.8:36), or "...a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke ch.12:15). As Jesus taught the parable of the foolish rich man (Luke ch.12:16-20), he stressed the importance of priorities in the quest for 'life'. The foolishness of the rich man lay more in his attitude to life than in his specific actions. He built his life on great expectations only to find sudden and bitter disillusionment at the very moment of their fulfilment. Life does not consist in possessing, said Jesus, rather it consists in living in the light of the higher goal, the Kingdom of God, toward which all our seeking should be directed. For the disciples worldliness presented itself in terms of anxious attitudes than in the overt materialism of the rich man, but in the light of the Kingdom our life-needs find a proper perspective and fulfilment.

The spiritual attainments of fulfilment are also stressed in the teaching of Paul the Apostle where in a passage from Philippians he writes:

"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me His own. Brethren, I do not consider that I have

made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. ch.3:10-14, R.S.V.)

He explains that every experience in life, with special reference to the fact of growing older, is to be accepted with eager expectation, for the gifts that Christ can give us, the prize, will be ours. Every moment is a moment of prize-winning and also prize-giving, and the full development of our talents and gifts can be a reality in the spiritual maturity of later years. In his letter to the Corinthians, he goes on to describe the operation of the Body of Christ, the Church, in terms of the essential functions of the various parts of the human organism. As he explains that, "As the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body" (1 Cor. ch.12:12), so the Church recognizes the value of gifts and experience in Christian living for the benefit of the whole fellowship. Thus the spiritual attainments and wisdom of the elderly have a vital part to play in the life of the Church and also in the wider community, and the inter-dependence of the various age-groups in this work has a great bearing on the effectiveness of the total witness of the Christian Church.

Hiltner's third point speaks of the adaptation of vocation and responsibility in later years, and he understand 'vocation' to mean a calling from God about one's work and also His service in all realms of life. He sees a threat to fulfilment unless one finds and exercises the calling and responsibility appropriate at every stage of existence. So the elderly person must not think that retirement from a remunerative job means the end of vocation or

social responsibility. Through his faith and Church association it should be possible for him to be involved in forms of real, practical service in and around the community where he lives.

Behind this idea is a dominant Biblical doctrine, namely Election, which is understood in the Bible to mean election for service. This has been widely misunderstood in the history of the Biblical revelation, for it led many to believe that being God's 'chosen people' was a privilege without corresponding responsibility to the world around. It certainly carried a privilege; for in the service of God is man's supreme privilege and honour. But the lesson that the old Israel had to learn throughout its history was that the Divine election meant that God had a claim to Israel's service. She was His people, bound to Him by a sacred Covenant, and so pledged to give God loyalty in service whereby the revelation granted to His 'chosen people' should be made known to the whole world. When the Church of Jesus Christ claimed that it was the spiritual Israel and the heir of the election, then she was called to match her high privilege by a sense of responsibility in a world-wide mission making God's revelation known everywhere. Following from this, members of the Church are individually called to receive the revelation of God's grace and character in the person of Jesus Christ, to reflect His will and nature in their lives, and to take some share in the task of making Him known to all men in their community.

So the Church, if it is to be truly a Church of Jesus Christ, cannot be exclusive, and must enter into the mission that the Lord entrusts to His people. Also it must manifest concern for the needy both to the fact of older years and to the preparation for it. How

and save them in love. In fact the one great corporate act of the early Churches was the collection, the ministry, for the poor and deserving in Jerusalem. One can go back further than this to the Jerusalem Church's own concern for its own poor and needy, to the "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" of the sermon of Jesus (Luke ch.6:46), and the grim picture of the Judgment, in which those who have not cared for Christ in the person of His hungry, naked, sick, imprisoned, alien brothers, depart into everlasting fire (Matt. ch.25:41,46).

As the whole company of the Church are involved in its essential mission and individuals and groups have special gifts, talents and experience to offer, then the elderly person is called to offer service just as much as he may be in a situation to receive it. As we shall indicate later, it is not only a question of discussing the Church's role in serving the needs of the elderly, but also recognising that the elderly have unique opportunities of serving in the 'caring' mission of the Church. With more time available they can be invaluable as agents of the Church's task, and in this way they can adapt their vocation to a new-found cause which offers them deep satisfaction and fulfilment.

Hiltner made the point that there is a second sense in which we may speak of a theology of aging, namely, in understanding the aging process as beginning long before the older years have come. Thus a theology of aging is both a theology for older people and a theology for those preparing to be older. He considers that the basic principles for a theology of aging as outlined above apply both to the fact of older years and to the preparation for it. How

we cope with loss, for example, in middle age means that attitudes are set for the older years when the losses are likely to be greater. The same holds true for vocation and responsibility. As Hiltner says, "Every man must deal with the fact of limitation as well as with that of creativity, with the contracting as well as with the expanding dimensions of life, with loss as well as with gain, with frustration as well as with fulfilment."¹ We have made the point already that some real effort must be made to make people of all ages aware of the nature of the process of aging, and that, to be successful, must start from school instruction. But within the Church's life a theology of aging is basic to all theology as the understanding and statement of the faith must be relevant to man in all stages of his development and in whatever society he may live and serve.

(b) A Theology of Community - whereby the Church serves as a Caring Fellowship

When we examine the way in which christian love is applied to the needs of the elderly, we must try to determine how far the Church has been a caring fellowship and to what extent it has achieved true community through its ministry.

(i) Criticism of the Church's role in society in the writings of H.Cox.

While the organisation and structure of the Church, and to a certain extent the nature of the gospel it proclaims, have experienced considerable criticism in modern times, the Church still conceives of

1. Ibid., p. 10.

its mission as a Caring Fellowship within the world. The call to the Church today is truly to lose herself in the service of the world's need, in order that she might gain her true life. Of course criticism of the Church's service has come from within as well as outside the Church, and in particular in the writings of H. Cox.¹ Here we are instructed that urbanisation has brought a new way of life in Western society. Increased mobility has resulted in anonymity, impersonality, and the break up of kinship groups. Because of this we are forced to seek new methods for planning and rationally controlling human life. He calls this age 'technopolis' and contrasts it with the former social forms of say the 'town'. He is critical of the way the Church continues to extol the values of the past eras, and his book is an appeal to the Christian to accept the age in which he lives and to apply his faith to it.

When Cox goes on to analyse the 'avant-garde' functions of the Church in the new situation, he speaks of three functions whereby the Church's missionary task is to be the vehicle of Christ's continuing presence in history. There is the Kerygmatic function - to believe the Kerygma means to believe that man is meant to have dominion over the earth and that in Christ the way is open to the defeat of all the powers that hold man back. Then the Diakonic function - where the Church continues the servant-ministry of Christ developing a strategy of mission that will work realistically within the structures of modern urban life so that true healing of relationships can occur.

1. Cox, H., The Secular City (S.C.M. Press, 1965).

2. Ibid., p. 160.

Finally the Koinoniac function - where the Church is to be a fellowship demonstrating in its life the reality of what it says in its Kerygma and points to in its Diakonia. He further goes on to speak of the Church acting as exorcist (just as Jesus is presented in the gospels as an exorcist within the mythical language of the age) within the secular understanding provided for us by the social sciences. This is taken to mean "that process by which the stubborn deposits of town and tribal pasts scraped from the social consciousness of man, and he is freed to face his world matter-of-factly."¹ As he continues to develop the theme of struggle with the 'principalities and powers' of today and outlines what it means for the Church to undertake this exorcist task, he comes to the conclusion that "the real ecumenical crisis of today is not between Catholics and Protestants but between traditional and experimental forms of Church life."²

Not that he is advocating the abolition of the local congregation. He conceives of Church life in the secular metropolis as certainly including congregations based on residence, but as residence touches people today in only one segment of their lives, it is necessary to have other forms of Church life alongside it. So we must look to the things that the parish can do; and remembering the great resources concentrated in residential parishes, the real question is how these resources can be channelled into an effective ministry in the city. Here there is continuing emphasis on those

1. Ibid., p. 154.

2. Ibid., p. 160.

things which the parish ministry cannot do effectively, and yet must be accomplished by new specialized ministries in industry, education, hospitals and penal institutions. But our main concern here is with that renewal of the parish ministry which can make a more vital contribution to the pastoral needs of the community, and, in particular, to the needs of that growing element in our population, namely the elderly. It is true that we must accept the social situation as it is, and come to terms with the changing situation of the family in present-day society. It may have been a desirable thing that the elderly should be cared for within the family group or at least in close proximity to it. What we must face today in our own society is the gradual break-up of the kinship groups, and the fact that the elderly are often separated by considerable distances from their closest kin. This does not mean that the care of the elderly is neglected, and that younger generations show less concern for them. It is more difficult for the family unit to maintain that kind of care in society today, and the Christian congregation must take the care of the elderly as a high priority in its activities of mission and service.

(ii) An examination of present congregational structures

But if we speak of an effective contribution to these problems by the Church through its parochial ministry, the question arises as to the efficacy of present congregational structures. Throughout most of the Church's history, the priest or minister has operated in a local congregation serving a particular parish or neighbourhood. But where modern society is characterized by urbanization and social

mobility, the old parochial structure is rapidly becoming obsolete. The old pattern of one minister to one congregation is likely to be replaced by group or team ministries, and not only for sheer economic necessity, but also because this structure allows for greater specialization within a more clearly-defined area of community interests. We have already mentioned that a special importance still belongs to a ministry that reaches people where they live at the level of family, and although family life is changing it still remains a basic social unit and acts as a base from which its members can give generous service to the community. If this is so it seems clear today that some form of specialization within the ministerial team or group can attempt to meet the special needs of various groups in the community with a reasonable hope of success. This will have a direct effect on congregational activities and the kind of service that is offered by members of these congregations. For many members the work of the Church seems to have little to do with the real concerns of everyday life and community needs. However important congregational activities may be in the various organizations that have characterized Church life through many generations, the Church in recent times has been trying to demonstrate the member's role in terms of involvement in the community embracing his whole service in whatever spheres he is engaged. While worship activities and the training and instruction of all age-groups in the faith is of vital importance, the minister's role as described in Ephesians - "To equip God's people for work in His service" (Eph. ch.4:11,12 N.E.B.) is related to the new outlook of the present time as an opportunity to train, inspire, guide, coach and work alongside his fellow-members

as a 'teacher of teachers', 'pastor of pastors', and 'counsellor of counsellors'.¹ Such a specialized function would enable the Minister to train his membership for mission in Church groups with a real concern for community needs. In speaking of the importance of these group formations it is worthwhile to remember that H. Cox drew attention to the break-down of the old primary groupings in the development of urbanization and the consequent decrease of the involvement of the Church in society. More recently, C. Davis has indicated that the great weakness of the modern Church is a lack of an adequate structure of 'primary groups' in which there can be intimate face-to-face association and cooperation. Without primary groups the Church cannot have deep roots in society; and the task of the congregation is to develop a variety of groups to meet specific community needs which can encourage the full participation of devotion, skill, and talents within the resources of membership. We shall see later how valuable this concept can be in respect of the needs of the elderly within the parochial situation.

In the past the Church did occupy a central place in the community, and it had a unique mission to the lonely, the needy and the forgotten. But in our own day we have seen the rapid advance and development of social and welfare agencies sponsored locally and nationally. If the Church is to play its full part as a centre of community in the future then it can only happen in close association with the social and welfare agencies. But as we have already indicated it is necessary for the Churches and their members

1. Niebuhr, H.R., The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (Harper and Row, 1956) pp. 82-85.

to see their role as Christians in a new light, particularly in community development.

(iii) The Church's role in community development

Community grows out of the constant interaction of the lives of people and groups as they live, work, worship and play together, and as they meet in different centres and places of social and family intercourse. True community offers to all of its members a sense of belonging, accords them status and significance, stimulates them to care for one another, and gives each one the opportunity to make his contribution to the welfare of the whole group. So any endeavour to promote community development implies a change of attitude and behaviour on the part of people and a training programme whereby they may develop new skills through working in cooperation. Various reports¹ have emphasised the Church's role in community development, and recognise that the individual congregations have premises and resources which not only act as a base of operations but also can furnish trained volunteers for work in the communities in which they reside. They recognise that the Churches are not working in opposition to the various agencies seeking community development, but should seek real areas for cooperation in achieving common purposes. They are both concerned with and can contribute to the alleviation of poverty, bad housing and unsatisfactory working

-
1. Report of the Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Services (H.M.S.O., 1968), commonly known as the Seebohm Report.
Community Work and Social Change - the Report of a Study Group on training set up by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Longmans, 1968), commonly known as the Gulbenkian Report.

conditions, and also attempt to eliminate racial, class and educational discrimination. Also to overcome loneliness, and seek the welfare of the very young and the old - who are especially at risk in modern society. In all this some effort is made to create community; and the Church offers its service in the light of the ministry of a Servant-Church. While proclaiming the Gospel and ministering the Sacraments she is involved in the world in the traditional expression of her mission, but she serves the community not solely for the purpose of increasing congregational membership, but to realise the true welfare of the people in community, namely God's community.

In developing a theological critique of community development, G. Lovell¹ outlines his conviction "that to work for the simultaneous development of the Church and the world is fundamental to the Church's ministry and mission."² He argues that we too often think in terms of building up the Church rather than building up the Church and the world of God's creation. For the world cannot be re-shaped into an ideal community by working only within the Church. Christians must realise that God is already at work in places unoccupied by the Church. Indeed, according to the New Testament, God's primary relationship is to the world He loves and desires to reconcile to Himself. In the light of this relationship between God, the world and the Church, Christians - basing their lives on the teaching and example of Christ,

1. Lovell, G., "The Mission of the Church and Community Development", The Expository Times, Nov. 1971, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 2.

2. Ibid., p. 53. *On the Love of God* (Collins, 1962), p. 127.

should be active in developing genuine brotherhood among men. So the Christian Church should be a witness of the community in the world; and in this way it can be a pattern of community whereby it manifests the love of Christ in its role of caring, sharing with and serving others.¹ In point of fact the Biblical narrative describes an ongoing search for community in the purpose of God. Jewish religious life has always centred round the idea of community, and the religious and theological background of this idea has indicated that it is a community of faith as much as a national community. All Israel is held responsible for each other, and members of the community feel that the others are brothers as well as compatriots. Duties like charity are binding not simply on the individual but on the community, and at different times and places Jews have felt called upon to establish communal institutions to deal with the widow, orphan, elderly, stranger or beggar. The importance of community is carried forward into the New Israel, the Church, and it is described by a whole variety of figures, metaphors and examples, of which the best-known is the Body of Christ. But as J. McIntyre has said, "The most daring account is that which regards the community as existing in Christ, and having its unity in Him."² The implication is not that absorption takes place in Christ, but rather community and members come to a rich new fulfilment of their whole being. That is why Paul uses the word 'body', and he describes

1. See also Lovell, G., The Church and Community Development (Grail Publications and Chester House Publications, 1972).

2. McIntyre, J., On the Love of God (Collins, 1962), p. 127.

1. Gieselmann, R., Contemporary Church Architecture (Thames and Hudson, 1972).

this community of the Church as one in which growth becomes possible for each and for all together, since each both serves and is served and their Lord is the source of the Love that binds them together and enables them to minister His Love to the world.

However the Church fulfils its destiny as the Community of Christ when it is missionary in character acting as the Servant-Church, and the guiding question for faithful service is not whether the Christian is serving the Church or serving the world, but whether one is serving the Lord of both. The Community of Christ must constitute a fellowship that transcends role, class, culture, nationality, and ecclesiastical affiliation, and in its election to service becomes the Caring Fellowship that creates true community wherever it may be. Yet we are aware of many factors in modern life which separate men from God and from each other, and so hinder true community in a Christian sense. It is not only hatreds and conflicts which separate or alienate individuals or groups and destroy community interests, but also with the dehumanizing forces within modern society we have to face more problems associated with isolation, neglect, and being unwanted or forgotten. Some writers see modern technology as a major factor in modern man's disorientation in society, and have enquired as to the possibility that consequences of technology can be compensated by religion. One such writer sees the answer in the renewed role of the Church as a medium capable of forming community in a dehumanized desert created by the application of modern mass-techniques to industry, commerce, town-planning and housing.¹ He believes that this can only come about with a

1. Gieselmann, R., Contemporary Church Architecture (Thames and Hudson, 1972).

reorientation of the Church's understanding of itself, and that the Church's primary task is not the pursuit of the transcendental but something much more clearly orientated to earthly matters. Certainly the Church is called to proclaim the distinctive message of Christ-crucified and risen, but it can only truly preach that gospel within the context of the world God loves and Christ came to save. If it follows the mission of the Servant-Church then it will seek to be totally identified with the community it serves, and community development enables the Church to fulfil its primary task in the present time.

In this connection the Church must be aware that the elderly experience this sense of alienation deeply, and loss of significance is one of the important factors which produce problems associated with old age at the present time. The community approach to old age is coloured by the fact that the old no longer have a rarity value; living long used to be a great achievement and was a source of pride, but now it is commonplace. The present predominance of the older age-groups is due to a coincidence of a high birth-rate in the last 2 decades of the 19th century, the lowered birth-rate of the opening years of the present century, and recent medical progress in the preventive field, so that death no longer thins so drastically the ranks of young and older individuals. Therapeutic advances have made their contribution too, with the result that far more people than ever before are living on into pensionable age. If the issues concerning old age are evaded or ignored, it is not surprising to find undesirable attitudes towards old age quite common in the community. Some may feel that the aged are a burden which should be eliminated

at all costs, while others who despise old age are only prepared to help in material ways to be rid of the responsibility. This denies the common humanity of young and old, and refuses to recognize old age as a normal stage of life. The elderly then are one group, in particular, who must be involved in community, and it is necessary to recognize that they bring compensating assets and values that the community needs for development.

(iv) Conclusion

A ministry for the aging is an inseparable part of the total mission of reconciliation entrusted to the Church in and through community. A theology of community is aimed to make explicit how the inner dynamics of the Church's life respond to the Love of Christ, and are the channel by which this Love will achieve full spiritual growth in the lives of the elderly.

1. This concept of community implies man's interdependence, and there is no group which can be neglected, least of all the elderly. The Church will seek to integrate the special gifts of experience, understanding, serenity and faith, which the elderly can often contribute, within the life of the community. The experience and balanced judgments which older people bring to local and national life are of inestimable value. The older person, in accepting that the material attitudes appropriate to the competitive stages in life are of temporary value, testifies to the enduring worth of spiritual and moral values. By their ability and willingness to forego many material things and yet remain happy and contented, they help to show the rising generations that the meaning of life transcends material

success or ambition and that true happiness is independent of both.

2. The Church must be a supportive community to help the individual through the challenging and threatening realities of life. This means that differing age-groups can be of help to one another as well as understanding the particular problems they may all have to face at some time or another. Encounter groups have shown that the 'generation gap' can be bridged, and age differences are no obstacle once the group process has really begun. In this respect the Church must help to improve communication between the older and younger generations, and the latter encouraged to understand the problems associated with loss - of relatives and friends, of home and independence, and also the preservation of personality when the elderly are forced to enter hospital or institution on a long-term basis.

But the Church will also be a caring fellowship for those who are weak, lonely and easily forgotten which can result in a supportive community which understands their troubles and assists them in their difficulties. In this way the elderly in distress will find a welcome and a help to live their lives in true community, and have the opportunity to renew their lives in real personal relationships.

3. Further the elderly can play their part in the leadership of the Christian Church by commitment and experience. It has been a rewarding experience to see younger age-groups take their full part in leadership responsibility in recent generations, but it would be a mistake to imagine that the elderly had no vital contribution to make in the modern Church. What they have to offer in terms of

faith and experience must be joined in partnership with the special qualities of younger age-groups. In this way the Church can be seen to be not only interested in all age-groups, but a fellowship that derives great strength and leadership from the cooperation between the younger and older groups. If the Church can show the possibility of real fellowship embracing different ages, then it is more likely to achieve this result in the community where it lives and serves.

Practical Application

The writer believes that there is a need for a specific ministry to the aged. But in the light of the previous section it is necessary, first, to outline what the Church can contribute practically to community development with special reference to the Elderly.

(a) The Church as a centre meeting community needs

John Highet¹ has pointed out how earlier in this century in Scotland the local parish church, even in the cities, was the focal point of many activities in addition to the purely religious activities.

"It is indisputable that one major social role of the Church has become a thing of the past. Sociologically, Scotland has travelled a long way from the situation, which still characterized the country 30 or 40 years ago, in which the local Church, even in the cities, was the focal point of many social and recreational activities, and in which its integrating influence could be measured by the fact that out of families whose lives already centred on the Church, there were very often linked the partnerships of young men and women who were to establish the new generation of family life

1. Highet, J., The Churches in Scotland Today (Jackson Son and Co., Glasgow, 1950).

in turn revolving (at any rate for a time) round the work and interests of the congregation."¹

This is still true of our own time, but the Church is more clearly aware of the new opportunities offered in community development. However it is largely true that while most parish churches have an organisational life which covers most age-groups, yet in most cases they have reference only to the membership of the Church - which is a small percentage of the total community involved. It is probably true to say that the most effective contribution on a community basis concerns the young and the old. The needs of the elderly have received far greater attention in recent years within the local Churches, and the church building has been used increasingly for welfare as well as religious purposes. The female elderly "sisterhood" religious meeting held on a week-day afternoon still meets a very real need, and in the writer's experience it can cater for a community regardless of religious denominational affiliation. But Old People's Welfare groups use church premises for social and recreational gatherings for both sexes, and increasingly luncheon clubs use Church facilities for week-day mid-day meals for the elderly. Also more activities are available for retired men who are willing to receive instruction in crafts, hobbies etc., as well as being enlisted to help in these activities by virtue of their own special skills and experience.

1. Ibid., p. 70.

(i) A church-based Community Service scheme

But if the Church is to be a true centre within the community then there must be a church-based community service meeting many needs, including the elderly. Within the last 2 years there has been a good example of the Churches being integrated with the Social Work department of the local authority in the case of the Portsmouth scheme, and this could serve as an excellent model to be adapted to different local conditions. This is best described as a church-based Community Service and Good Neighbour scheme, which has received urban aid grants from the Home Office. In this case Churches of different denominations are involved. The basic idea is that a Community Work Organiser, although employed by the local authority department of social services, is seconded to the Church base and works to the minister-in-charge whilst maintaining liaison with the appropriate Area Social Services Office. The eventual aim of the scheme is to establish church or community-based schemes covering the whole city and interlocking on their neighbourhood boundaries. In point of fact there are 5 Community Organisers in posts at present (October, 1973), and it is hoped the number will rise to 20. The

Community Work Organiser will have responsibility for the following:-

1. The organisation of a good neighbour/street warden scheme, and this neighbourhood scheme will cover the local area with the aim of providing a representative in each street. This kind of service is particularly supportive to the elderly and handicapped living alone.
2. A centre for the elderly, either a day club or leisure centre, which could be available on 5 or 7 days a week.

3. A creche and a meeting place for young mothers with the possibility of a group work project, and an increase in play-group provision.

4. A therapeutic social club for the mentally-ill and/or the mentally handicapped, and also a club for the physically handicapped.

5. The extension of existing youth clubs to receive mentally-handicapped young people.

6. The inclusion of intermediate treatment facilities for young persons under the Children's and Young Persons Act.

7. A voluntary counselling service, where appropriate.

Our own special interest is with (1), (2) and possibly (4), where it relates to the elderly. In regard to the Good Neighbour Scheme there are 3 Good Neighbour Organisers, one based on each Area Office, 12 paid Good Neighbours and about 1,000 voluntary Good Neighbours. Good neighbours are employed and their services are terminated at the discretion of the organiser according to need in a particular area. This scheme was started with the aim of having at least one good neighbour in each street. The work undertaken by the good neighbour varies with each client, but basically it is to give short-term intensive care and support under the guidance of the social worker and organiser until such time as other arrangements, e.g. residential care placement, hospitalization etc., are made. They are expected to visit the elderly or disabled approximately 3 times a day undertaking essential shopping but not performing the duties of a Home Help, although the 'Home Help' section and 'good neighbour' organiser work very closely together. The voluntary good neighbours perform set duties, such as, helping to dress the clients

and make sure they are ready to attend the Day Centres; receiving elderly or disabled persons discharged from hospital; and general neighbourliness which includes shopping and help around the house. There is a monthly meeting of the organiser with the good neighbours, and members of the staff from the Social Services attend these meetings. Further the Street Wardens are trained to be aware of the needs of the elderly and disabled in their street. They should be able to either direct people to the appropriate statutory bodies or make an approach for them, and also report any unusual circumstances or a specific need either to the social worker, good neighbour Organiser or the Police. In cases of referral, the case is discussed by the social worker and the good neighbour Organiser, and when the best method of help is decided upon, the good neighbour Organiser then approaches the appropriate good neighbour. If the client is in need of intensive care the good neighbour works to the social worker. If supportive care is needed with an occasional visit from the social worker then the good neighbour works to the good neighbour Organiser giving routine reports. There are many people known to the organiser who are supported by good neighbours and are not in need of more professional care. Immediately there is a need the Area Office (Social Services) is contacted by the organiser. In this way they make sure that elderly and disabled are given professional help at an early stage. The Portsmouth department of social services reports:

"That the 'Good Neighbour' scheme is proving very effective indeed after a short time in operation. Those who live alone appreciate the personal approach and the personal help given, and benefit enormously. It is difficult to see how

(11) any mechanical warning system could be so effective as frequent personal visits or as reassuring to the person in need." 1

It follows from this survey that it is necessary for every local area to have some kind of register supplying information regarding the elderly or disabled living alone, and giving some indication of the degree of risk involved in their situation.

(1) In Scotland there are examples of church-based advice centres which have used Citizens Advice Bureau facilities to provide legal advice, information on housing, social security benefits and, in particular, help for the elderly as far as pensions, benefits and further assistance is concerned. This means that regular visitors organised by voluntary social workers not only visit to keep an adequate supervision in operation, but also can help the elderly to receive the social benefits that they are entitled to, and give practical help in their homes which is often supplied by young people's groups. The Citizens Advice Bureau are very keen to supply this kind of service in as many areas as possible in towns and cities, but naturally hope that local workers can take over these services later and free the Bureau to transfer to other places. They would still help the local office by providing up-to-date information, and possibly make arrangements for special advisors and counsellors to visit the community centre to give specialist help.

-
1. The information recorded in the text is based on various departmental memoranda (unpublished) supplied by courtesy of the City of Portsmouth Department of Social Services during 1973.

In the light of this the Ministers must have some principles of

(ii) Conclusion

To conclude, there seems to be in the above community centres a pointer to the necessity of practical cooperation between the Churches and the social services which can be effective over a wide field of community needs. If this is to be realised, then it must follow:-

- (1) That the Churches must see their future mission in local community development terms.
 - (2) That the Churches are involved in a radical re-appraisal of the use of buildings, organisations and resources with this in mind.
 - (3) That the Churches must provide the information regarding the elderly and disabled living on their own within the parochial areas, and for this purpose institute parish visitations and surveys.
 - (4) That the Churches institute adequate programmes of lay and ministerial training in Church and community development work.
- These recommendations will be taken up and considered in greater detail in the final chapter of this work.

(b) A Pastoral Ministry to the Elderly - outlining pastoral priorities

We may say broadly that the Christian Faith has a fourfold task in helping the elderly as they adjust to the situation presented in their latter years, namely:-

- (1) to help them face impending death and overcome anxieties and fears,
- (2) to give them a meaning and purpose for later life,
- (3) to assist them to accept the inevitable losses of age, and also
- (4) to help them in the discovery of compensatory values.

In the light of this the Ministers must have some principles of

selectivity as well as priority for the direction of his pastoral work amongst the elderly. When he visits the elderly he arrives as a representative of the Christian congregation showing the concern of the fellowship for them, and in particular the lonely, the recently bereaved, and those recently discharged from hospital. He goes to them as one who is ready and willing to listen, and if his listening is creative then it is likely to bring release for pent-up feelings and give the person a new perspective on the situations that trouble them. Whenever he calls he is learning something more about this person, and so better able to assess their needs and value. But above all, in all that he does he will acquaint the elderly with the services, resources and opportunities in the Church, and seek to enlist their interest and loyalty in the work of the Kingdom of God.

While it is true that all groups in the Church should be considered in the list of ministerial priorities, in the case of the elderly he will remember those at greatest risk as well as the call of special needs. We have already mentioned those living alone, recently bereaved and recently discharged from hospital. To this list it is possible to add those who have become disabled in a physical sense and those who have mental impairment, with also consideration for those showing a tendency to isolate themselves for some reason or other. But in the organisation of his pastoral visitation, he will be probably guided by the categories of crisis, continuous strain or routine calls. In this sense the list under crisis for the elderly must be enlarged to include not only illness

and bereavement, but also retirement, moving to a new house and financial restrictions. Under continuous strain we could find chronic illness, housing difficulties or interpersonal tensions. If this kind of arrangement of priorities is accepted, then it is necessary to outline the main considerations in achieving a helpful pastor-parishioner relationship with the elderly in mind.

J.L. Cedarleaf¹ stated 4 points which are relevant in the Pastor's understanding of older people in regard to their pastoral care. It is necessary that the pastor appreciates the dynamics, or the inner, motivating and influential factors, in the personalities of older people. He must try to look beyond the superficial into the deeper meanings of the behaviour and attitudes of an elderly person. Further he should try to view people in terms of the direction in which they are moving rather than concentrate simply on where they have come from, bearing in mind that direction may reverse itself at times, if some previously developed - but lately unused resources, are brought back into service. Finally he must be alert to the tendency for fundamental personality patterns to consolidate in later maturity. In his research he found 3 classifications of personality, in this sense of movement and direction of personality, which were practically helpful. There were the successfully creative persons, those struggling towards creativity, and those whose creativity had been submerged. In the case of the first category, he found that they had consolidated the basic trends of life's experience into a

1. Cedarleaf, J.L. and Maves, P.B., Older People and the Church (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949), p.93ff.

satisfactory pattern, and had readjusted to the specific losses of later maturity with compensatory and creative satisfactions in life. Then the second category of those struggling towards creativity found people who had adjusted to certain of the inevitable losses of later maturity, but new threats and demands often produced anxiety. They needed help to use such crisis to move in the direction of successful creativity. Lastly there were those who had attempted to deal with the losses of later maturity by not accepting them. They had developed little capacity for mutuality in relationship to other people and for tolerance and acceptance in relation to themselves. So when confronted with any frustration or new demand they tended to react in terms of withdrawal, resentment and self-accusation. In the light of this they were not more open to help than previously, and none of this group was expected to move in the direction of a more positive readjustment.

Within In terms of pastoral priorities, he considered that the pastor should devote most of his time to the group of persons struggling towards creativity, and any of the last group in whom growth was still a practical possibility. Although in the light of his conclusions it did not seem likely that many could be so considered. Then he felt the pastor should be alert to any new needs in the successfully creative group, and to the onset of illness or other new experiences upon members of any group. This would include new crisis experiences, without special personality reference, and also the convincing needs of the shut-ins requiring special attention. In conclusion, the priorities of pastoral care are not anxiety. If this process is successful, then the Church has helped

decided simply by reference to physical criteria, but rather on basically spiritual criteria, where the direction of life-movement is the primary consideration. It seems to the writer that if we seek to determine priorities then for the pastor it is essential that he spends his time not only upon those with the greatest need, but mainly upon those who have the capacity to respond to help. Other categories should still receive the patient, supportive help that comes from a truly 'caring' fellowship, and the opportunity may then emerge for successful counselling and help. There is further the chance for the pastor to play his part not only in renewal but also in comfort. In this way the pastor helps the elderly member through a crisis situation by being readily available to guide and comfort them, but there is also the possibility that he can help such a person to pass through a crisis situation through the achievement of insight or new awareness of resources either within himself or available around him. So in the case of the crisis of bereavement there is the opportunity of a ministry of comfort, but later in the help which is extended to the bereaved in the difficult process of readjustment there is a ministry of healing and renewal. So we could express this in another way by saying that the minister, in his pastoral work, can help people to get through difficult experiences, but also help to foster within their lives a problem-solving capacity. However the pastoral function can only be fully expressed within the life of the Church, where worship can help to reorient a person's outlook so that new strength and vision play their part in overcoming loneliness or anxiety. If this process is successful, then the Church has helped

such a person to develop an inner security, which is a development and maturity of character, and this has resulted from the understanding, acceptance, and love which the fellowship demonstrated as it proclaimed and practised the gospel of Jesus Christ.

(c) Church programmes for the Elderly

It is considered by many as axiomatic that elderly people should be integrated as far as possible into the total fellowship of the Church; in other words, the ideal pattern of social relationships is one of integration into organisational life rather than segregation from people of younger ages. The research of R.M. Gray¹ provided empirical evidence which supported the conclusion:

"The welcoming of all people into the Church often helps to integrate older and younger persons into a common fellowship like that of an extended family which includes people of all ages. When the aging are treated as individuals who are a part of this larger fellowship, and not categorically as old people, the morale of the older member is greatly built up." 2

Indeed it could be said that the Church is one of the few organisations in modern society where it is possible for all age groups to come together in fellowship, and for this reason the elderly have a real opportunity to understand the thoughts and aspirations of the young while the reverse process is equally significant. Although this may be true it is doubtful if most Churches have given enough attention to the peculiar interests and needs of the elderly. It is

1. Gray, R.M. and Moberg, D.O., The Church and the Older Person (Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962).

2. Ibid., p. 115.

assumed that these interests and needs are met satisfactorily through the traditional Church programmes, and it is taken for granted that the elderly are integrated into the total life of the congregation. As a result, they often feel that no specialized activities or services for the elderly are needed. But the religiously devout elderly members who are an integral part of the Church often experience dissatisfactions and frustrations in connection with the very life of the congregation, in addition to the additional burdens of the aging process. It could be that many of the elderly feel that they are being neglected in favour of the younger members, and some may even believe that the young are trying to take over their positions in the Church. If this is true then it is not surprising that they resent this, and they will probably feel that they, because of their spiritual maturity and experience, should continue to supply some part of the leadership of the Church. If many old members are not getting all they possibly could from the Church because they experience dissatisfactions in their relationship with younger age-groups, then it must be taken as a serious issue that the Church should try to resolve in the true context of fellowship. Of course it can be argued that calling attention to the needs and interests of the aged through specialized programmes in the Church is not always the best policy. Is it always the best policy to single out and segregate the elderly and make them more aware of their common interests, if that means they interact more exclusively with one another and so create a relatively isolated subculture of the aged in the life of the Church?

It seems to the writer that it is natural and desirable for the elderly to have special activities within the Church where they are drawn to the company of their own age-group, but it is just as important that they should achieve a proper integration within the life of the fellowship where their witness and activity is shared with others.

When we consider church programmes for the elderly we make the emphasis once more that whatever special activities may be set up for the older group, it is important to achieve full integration into the whole life of the Church which maintains a balance of all ages in its activities. The first important consideration deals with the religious aspect, and seeks to offer:

(i) Guidance and help in the spiritual life of the elderly.

As most of the elderly have had a continuing association with the Church in their lives it is most important that they are welcomed into the full, warm fellowship of a friendly Church. It is quite likely that they will be very familiar with the order of worship that is practised in most Churches, but it is also true - in the writer's experience - that they welcome many innovations in worship of a musical nature where these are presented by younger age-groups. They naturally feel at home in traditional forms of worship, but they are more inclined to accept occasional new ventures in religious musical presentation than new orders of service. Many elderly look forward to meeting friends and acquaintances at worship, and the intimacy and warmth of fellowship achieved through worship is a vital consideration for them.

Many elderly people are unable to attend worship regularly, and in some cases they may not manage at all. This presents the Church with a growing pastoral responsibility, but it is also an opportunity to make provision for their needs within the worshipping community. Many regular Church members who find themselves cut off from church worship owing to old age, bad health or disablement, suffer a grievous blow to their spiritual morale. It is essential that every effort is made to maintain this link, and there are ways open to the congregation to help them. The Minister, in company with the district Elder, can arrange to dispense the Sacrament in the home possibly two or three times a year, and young people in the company of members can visit these elderly people occasionally to provide short, informal services. We have already mentioned the value of radio or television services for the elderly or disabled, but it is far more important to make them aware that their membership is real and meaningful regardless of their physical condition.

It is well known that ministers spend a considerable part of their visitation programme on visits to the elderly, but it is just as important that the Stewardship programme of lay visitation should endeavour to include the elderly, especially the 'shut-in', in its operation. Where Elders of the Church of Scotland know the people of their district well, then it follows that many visit the elderly regularly outside the traditional quarterly visit at communion time. In certain congregations Lady Visitors, who visit the homes when the Church magazine is distributed, are able to maintain a link with the district Elder especially in this connection, and the Church alive and real to the elderly concerned.

frequency of visits is increased. Under Stewardship visiting programmes, special visitors are recruited to visit the elderly, disabled and 'shut-in's', and by concentration on the two or three persons under their care they are able to increase the effective support that is necessary for many elderly people. It does seem essential that in all these schemes a proper training system should be established. The visitors should meet regularly to discuss their visits with the Minister and Elders concerned, and a proper review of the number visited must be made annually so that new cases of need can be appraised and, if possible, included in the future programme. But more important, the visitors must be guided, first, in their understanding of old people, so that they might appreciate the characteristics of old age - its loneliness, its insecurity and fears, its regrets and remorse. Then, secondly, they must be given a simple understanding of the technique of helping, and in the light of this must at all times respect the old person, however difficult or confused they might be. In other words, they must be shown the need for sensitivity and for imagination. Lastly, they should be informed regarding the basic knowledge of what help is available for the elderly if it is required, and make prompt contact with the Minister so that proper referral could be made. But quite naturally the Church visitors will seek to inform the elderly visited about happenings in the Church, and do all in their power to keep the elderly 'shut-ins' conversant with the life of the congregation. They may also be able to use tape-recordings of special church services, Songs of Praise or Bible readings to make the Church alive and real to the elderly concerned.

Certain church organisations have a strong religious and devotional appeal, and in the form of women's afternoon meetings cater very largely for the older woman. These are normally very well attended, and serve a real need for continuing spiritual comfort and support. The high-light of the meeting is the 'religious' address, and the rest of the programme gives full scope for the singing of familiar hymns to Moody and Sankey tunes. Above all the meeting satisfies a further need for companionship, and the members are so well known to one another that absence generally prompts enquiry and visitation on the part of the committee members. Also many older people find particular help in becoming members of adult Bible Study groups, and not only find these groups beneficial in terms of religious knowledge gained, but have the time and interest to follow up various aspects of religion that have always interested them. This can be more stimulating for them if there is discussion with persons of similar interests, and it is important to note that the best groups have members from different age-groups. Prayer groups are also well-supported by older members who have a keen appreciation of the necessity and value of intercessory prayer with some considerable experience of the benefits throughout their own lives.

(ii) The realisation of a full social life within the community.

A satisfactory church or community programme for the elderly will put into practice rehabilitation, remotivation, the therapeutic value of group activities, and help members to assume responsible roles for helping themselves and each other. We have seen the

development in recent years of Old People's clubs, luncheon clubs, retirement educational services, and many other social and recreational services, and in this movement the elderly have played a full part in its organisation and developed leadership talents.

As E.T. Culver has said:¹

"It is the dynamic of recreation - the movement from spectator to participant, from self-centred attitudes of despair to the outward thrust of service and appreciation of others - in which we can see a special reason for the Church's interest."²

It should be possible to tap and focus the resources of potential leadership within the elderly to build up these same activities.

As E.T. Culver goes on to say:

"The Churches need to give prompt and thoughtful attention to the matter of recruiting competent leadership for senior activities from the ranks of their own new retirees, making use of the talents they have, and supplementing these talents with special training in group work and a knowledge of aging, its problems and opportunities." 3

This leads us to consider the Church's responsibility in the wider area of community and not only the aspect of congregational life. Here, too, the elderly can play their part with members of other age-groups in serving the needs of those elderly and disabled who are lonely, sick and in difficulty. We have already mentioned the need to survey an area, or parish, thoroughly and maintain some system of frequent revision and follow-up. This can be done by periodic visitation programmes with special emphasis on the elderly who are living on their own or are in some category of

1. Culver, E.T., New Church Programs with the Aging (Association Press, New York, 1961).

2. Ibid., p. 115.

3. Ibid., p. 115.

risk or need. Elders with districts within the parish area can utilise local knowledge supplied by members or adherents who take note of changes in the situation of the elderly in their streets. It may be necessary to institute a system of 'street wardens' where the members are given a specific job and responsibility so that the reporting procedure is put on a regular basis and adequately supervised. It is very important to plan this type of supervision in close contact with the medical services and the social welfare agencies. It may not happen very often, but it is essential that a close link be established between the local Church and the local general practitioners. Where this link is harmonious and information is shared, then the effectiveness of the coverage mentioned will be considerably enhanced. In the same way contacts with social workers, particularly the medical and psychiatric social workers, will mean that information concerning the elderly who are discharged from hospital can be taken up immediately, and the consequent visitation and supervision will be far more effective. If the Portsmouth type of programme is operative, then the scheme can be far more broadly based and a continuing network of supervision established which covers the locality in a far more efficient way. But if this is true then a case can be made for a much larger area of reference, and it may be that a number of parishes joined together will form a more homogeneous unit for this purpose within the community. The possibility of this development is quite likely in various areas of our towns and cities where Church readjustment is increasing, and the value of group and team ministries have a special application

in this respect. A group ministry or a specialized ministry to the elderly within a team ministry is far more relevant to the planning of welfare services for the elderly than the present parochial system. The arbitrary and often meaningless parish boundaries found in city charges have no real reference to community as such, and it is to be hoped that future changes will take these factors into account when they are put into operation.

As far as Church premises are concerned a great many facilities are offered and the scope of these has certainly increased in recent years. Some reference has already been made to the type of activity for the elderly which actually takes place in many church buildings. It may not be possible in every case to lay aside a special room for the exclusive use of the elderly, but this is desirable as a meeting-place or a centre where occupational therapy can be adapted to the needs of the elderly on a local, community basis. It is obviously difficult to get paid trained help like the geriatric 'day centres', but by mobilising the resources of the congregation and community it is not out of the question that volunteers can be organised to provide such facilities in addition to classes dealing with retirement problems and furnishing information and help on a wide variety of social and domestic needs. Not only that, but also to organise helpers who can visit the homes of the elderly in need, and provide help within their homes which is badly needed. This kind of service has been offered in the activities of 'Task Force', and it has shown that young people are quite prepared to help the elderly when the need has been clearly

defined. So from the Church centre volunteer help, including particularly young people, can assist the elderly by doing odd jobs around the house and garden, decorating rooms, going to the launderette, shopping, or even escorting the elderly on certain visits. This type of activity proves not only helpful for the elderly concerned, but has the advantage of giving young people the experience of the practical consequences of the aging process. The elderly, in the main, welcome this contact with young people, and it is important for the young to realise the importance of continuity and dependability in the services offered. The value of the Church as a community centre is not only that the Church acts out its role as a true servant of the community, but also establishes the true relationships within community, overcoming the generation gap and giving to the elderly the knowledge that they are wanted and can live as persons with rights and dignity. In the light of present developments concerning the fuel crisis, it is even more necessary that the Church plays its full part in attending to the needs of the elderly in a good-neighbour capacity.

(iii) The operation of a Counselling service within the Church.

In advocating this kind of service we are not only considering the pastoral counselling of the minister concerned, but suggesting the need to help old people on a wide variety of problems that affect them today. Many elderly people are unaware of the extent of the health and welfare services which are available for them, and Church-related counselling can also help at the most crucial point of retiring. In this way it may be possible to preserve the

individual's self-respect and strengthen his will to continue as a contributing member of society. The elderly do not need a prop, but an incentive - a motivation, to develop to the fullest extent the capacities with which they have been endowed and still remain at their command. Retirement is an appropriate time for any person to rethink the motives that govern his life, and decide what he really wants most of all to make his life worth-while.

The Church is going to be faced, more and more, with demands for formal counselling of the aged. We can see that this will arise from changes in the patterns of family life with the problem of the three-generation family and the two-generation housing. There are not only problems of parents and children, but also that of mutual respect and consideration between grandparents and children. The minister has very often the knowledge about the family to understand how the problem has arisen, and may know what preventive action it might be possible to take to ward off or mitigate this kind of conflict before it arises or becomes acute. He will try to help a person to weigh the spiritual and material motivations in his life and adjust the activity of his retirement years to a pattern more in accord with the highest motivations. So time will be available for spiritual considerations so often crowded out of the middle years. In bereavement he has the task of guiding the person through the grief process, and enabling him to adapt to the new situation which is presented by the loss of life's partner.

It must be increasingly the policy of the Churches to help in the institution of pre-retirement courses for the community, and within the congregational membership and the wider community it is

more than likely that speakers can be encouraged to speak on subjects like; housing for older people, social service facilities - pension rights, supplementary benefits, rent and rate rebates, health considerations, cultural and educational facilities, budgeting on reduced incomes, legal questions - how to make a will, starting a small business etc., hobbies and crafts, including gardening, and the possibilities of service within the Church for membership and community. But there is also a need for an ongoing counselling unit which could be made up of retired professional people, which operates as a team or as individual counsellors dealing with pre- or post-retirement problems which can be referred to Church or community facilities. A variation on the latter suggestion is to introduce a 'mutual counselling group' for older persons - probably not more than 12 or 15, who meet regularly to talk over some of the new problems that confront them as they make their adjustment to the different life presented in their later years. The Minister may join such a group as an ordinary member if this is thought desirable by the group. As the group discusses these problems they could invite speakers to give talks on different aspects of the question, which has the advantage of fitting more naturally into the development of the discussion and makes questions more relevant to people's needs in the light of the questions raised. For example, talks could be given once a month, followed by weekly meetings of these small, informal groups, and they may be held within the Church or in member's homes.

However in all these programmes the Church will not be content
 geriatric services, a programme of training for counsellors of the

simply to provide services for the older person, but accept older members as whole persons with their own special and significant contribution to make to the ongoing pattern of life. If the Church helps people to live their increasing life-span to the fullest, using all the capacities and talents with which they are blessed, then the Church will in turn discover new and potent resources for its ongoing ministry and spiritual renewal. It is important that the elderly play their full part in the government and leadership of the Church in association with younger age-groups. By virtue of greater leisure time they can engage in visitation of the sick, disabled and 'shut-in' with the benefits of experience and understanding, and still perform a valid teaching function in the Church by their own example and continuing faith. Their example of commitment and pleasure in the work of the Church can be an inspiration to younger age-groups, and the care and maintenance of Church property and grounds is often faithfully dealt with by older members. As the older person loses his life in sincere service to his God, his Church and his fellows, it is more likely that he will find the 'abundant life' which is characterized by good personal and social adjustment. It is part of the aim and object of church programmes for the elderly that this kind of fulfilment should be achieved.

(iv) Age Concern Scotland - Counselling Scheme.

The need for a counselling service for the elderly and their relatives has been proposed by the organisation known as Age Concern Scotland. With the encouragement of social work agencies and the geriatric services, a programme of training for counsellors of the

elderly has been set up in Paisley and Kirkcaldy. It is hoped that up to 40 students will take part in the courses which are organised to cover the period from October, 1974 to March, 1975. Each course will be tutored by two professional social workers. The suggested training programme will be divided into two parts; the first, directed towards giving basic information, and the second, emphasising the techniques and methods of counselling. The outline, as conceived by the Rev. J.M. Griffin, is as follows:-

Part One.

1. What it's all about.
2. Human development and needs.
3. Community Provision for the elderly. Statutory & Voluntary.
4. The Department of Health and Social Security. Money matters.
5. Housing.
6. Residential Care. What do you do with granny?
7. Medical Matters. (The first of three sessions).
8. Case work, the right to choose. (The first of three sessions).
9. Communicating with the elderly. Defective vision, hearing, speech, etc.
10. Case recording.

Review of Part One. Planning for Part Two.

Part Two.

This session will include, apart from further medical talks and sessions on case work, such things as: Changing patterns of family life; Preparation for Retirement; Effects of bereavement, compulsory retirement, etc; Spiritual needs of the elderly.

It is envisaged that the counselling service will benefit from referrals made by local general practitioners and district nurses, social work departments, street wardens (where a regular visiting service for the elderly is in operation), and from relatives of the elderly concerned. After consultations have been arranged and the counsellors have visited the elderly in their homes, whatever decisions may be taken on their behalf, it is hoped that regular visitors will be able to take over as a necessary follow-up to the counselling procedure. Age Concern Scotland hope that it will be possible, if it proves successful in the two pilot areas, to extent the counselling scheme on a national basis.

(v) Conclusion

There will be an opportunity in the final chapter to make recommendations regarding the church's programme for the care and welfare of an increasing number of elderly people in the community. At this stage it is enough to suggest the following guide lines whereby the Church may best serve their needs and encourage their full participation in community.

- (1) The Church will continue to promote a ministry that seeks to give meaning to life in the context of the aging process.
- (2) The Church will institute programmes focused on intra-personal and interpersonal relations, and seek the development of counselling methods and group relations within the life of the Church in community.
- (3) The structure of Church life and organisation should be examined with the needs of the elderly in mind. The grouping

of Churches on a district basis is more likely to serve the needs of the elderly as with other age-groups.

(4) The Churches must take every opportunity to cooperate with social work and welfare agencies, and establish a permanent system of supervision and care for the elderly.

(d) The Institutional Care of the Elderly by the Church of Scotland.

We have already mentioned that the elderly living in residential homes are a very unrepresentative group as far as the community at large is concerned. This means that the single, the widowed, and the childless are over-represented. It is estimated that around 13% of all over 65s in Britain are single but they make up a third of the population of old people's homes. Then a quarter of the married or widowed in Homes are childless. Nearly a half of those admitted to Homes were living alone immediately before admission. Further, in the survey of Residential Homes for the Aged in England and Wales by P. Townsend,¹ there is a description of the effects upon old people of living in Homes which formed the basis of the study. He indicates that many are frustrated by having no satisfying tasks to perform, and yet are anxious and able to help in the Home or to do something to occupy their time more fruitfully. There is also evidence of isolation from family, friends and community. He stresses the tenuousness of new relationships within the Homes, and the loneliness which many said they experienced there. Although much of the loneliness could be

1. Townsend, P., The Last Refuge (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962).

attributable to recent bereavement, infirmity or loss of home, there was reason to believe that it was reinforced by the shortcomings of institutional life. Loss of privacy and identity is mentioned, and many missed having their own room, furniture or possessions. While a majority in his survey expressed satisfaction with the amenities and management, only a third wanted to stay in a residential Home. In fact it was found that many long-stay residents maintained "a tenacious hold on their individuality and on hopes of eventually returning to a home of their own".¹ A Church of Scotland Residential Home, of the type which figured in the present research project, is more likely to overcome many of the points raised above. It is of interest at this stage to outline briefly the nature of this institutional care promoted by the Church of Scotland.

The Church of Scotland began its work for the aged in 1926, when its first Eventide Home was opened at Powfoulis House, Bothkennar, Stirlingshire. This work has developed over the years to such an extent that 45 Homes are in use up to the present time. While the number of the elderly cared for in these Homes stands in the region of 1300 (and in the proportion of 3 women to every man), waiting lists for admission have always been long and the number of active applications remains over 1,000. Many of the applicants in urban areas are known to be in very considerable need, and yet the waiting period for admission to town or city Homes can extend to several years. These Eventide Homes have tried to create

1. Ibid., p. 369.

a true family atmosphere while giving the individual resident considerable independence and encouraging different kinds of outside contacts. They do not cater for the very sick or disabled, and nursing attention is available for only the occasional ailment. There are no restrictions on movement consistent with the normal regulations for meals, and arrangements can be made for doctors to visit their patients at the Homes. A further development of the Committee's work took place in 1966 when Flatlets were opened in Glasgow where elderly people might live with a large measure of independence and yet have a certain degree of help and security in case of sickness or advancing age. Local authorities operate these flatlets where a caretaker or warden is in charge, who may have some nursing experience and is able to assist the occupants where this is necessary. This type of accommodation is a half-way house for those who do not wish, or are unable to live alone and yet are not in such circumstances where admission to an Eventide Home is necessary.

The Committee on Social Service (Church of Scotland) were well aware of the great need to provide accommodation for the frail elderly and also to cope with those who become bed-ridden or infirm while in an Eventide Home. As far as it was possible sick bays and rooms on the ground floor were added to all new Homes, and, where possible, to older established Homes. Following proposals made at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1964, a working party was set up to enquire into the possibility of helping those who were not fit enough to satisfy conditions for normal admission to Homes as constituted and staffed, but not ill enough

to require hospitalization. A pilot scheme was started at an Eventide Home in Aberdeen, and a more elaborate scheme followed at Baxter House, Glasgow. The latter continued to function as an Eventide Home, but buildings were attached to constitute a Special Care Unit. Admission was not to be subject to the normal rule governing the Home, but residents could be admitted even if they came in a wheel-chair or on a stretcher. A nursing unit would provide continuous nursing attention, and it was envisaged that the whole complex would provide for 96 residents. This was finally completed by 1972, but owing to staffing difficulties it had not been brought into full use by the end of that year. It had been the Committee's intention on the Assembly's instructions to provide 'something ahead of the time', but the last Report of the Committee to the General Assembly, 1973, stated: "It would appear that the Committee's desire to diversify the kinds of care of old people (in one building) was still regarded by some Local Authorities as something outside their experience".¹ Further preparations were made to set up new Special Care Units in connection with existing Homes, and the Queen's Bay Lodge unit was opened in the summer of 1973. Owing to the fact that "special care" is a designation with particular meaning in hospitals, the Committee resolved that these establishments in the Church's work should be termed "Annexes" in the future. So the Newlands Annexe at the Queen's Bay Lodge Eventide Home became the sixth special admission unit to be opened for this purpose.²

1. The Church of Scotland, Reports to the General Assembly (William Blackwood, 1973) p.387.
2. For further information, Cameron, Lewis, L.L., The Challenge of Need (The Saint Andrew Press, 1971), pp. 217-224.

However the same 1973 report of the Social Service Committee suggested that the Church of Scotland might restrict the development of new Eventide Homes and apply its skill and resources towards developing new concepts of caring for the aged, in the shape of sheltered housing and flatlets. "There is some opinion that, in face of the development of Local Authority residential care, the Church of Scotland might now restrict development of new Eventide Homes and apply its skill and resources towards developing new concepts of social care. It is quite clear that there is a growing need for caring services for the elderly in Scotland and the Church should continue to expend energy and finance in this vital task."¹ The report says that the era of the provision of increased numbers of traditional Eventide Homes may be coming to an end. They visualise that future developments of accommodation for old people would be sheltered housing, using the housing association method. The committee added that it possesses considerable areas of ground suitable for building in the grounds of many of the existing eventide homes, but it realised that it might be necessary to acquire ground in other places if this work were to expand. In point of fact the Committee officially announced the inauguration of the Kirk Care Housing Association in November, 1973. It was made clear that it is intended that the houses will be used for pre-eventide home applicants. In this accommodation the main meal of the day will be provided, but it is hoped to allow for maximum independence for the

1. Church of Scotland, Assembly Reports (1973), p. 391.

residents consistent with a reasonable degree of care.

This is in line with the increased use of sheltered housing by local authorities, and the emphasis laid by the Health Service where instead of opening a new geriatric hospital every effort will be made to develop better community care for the old. Indeed it is in the interests of the individual and the community that the elderly should remain in their own homes and live in the community as participating members as long as possible. Where this is not possible then it may be desirable to encourage them to use sheltered housing or the shared household. The Abbeyfield Trust have pioneered a venture whereby single elderly persons live together in a large house, each having their own bed-sitting room and being responsible for its day-to-day care and cleanliness. However, all the inhabitants of the household have one cooked meal together in the communal dining room and share a common room with recreational facilities. They own the furniture and movable fittings in their own room but do not have to maintain or run the whole house by themselves. This gives independence and privacy, combined with a high degree of support and social contact. Most elderly people would prefer this kind of independent living arrangements rather than institutional life, and this is quite understandable when they have a fear that institutional life will deprive them of their independence and make it more likely that they will be associated with the sick, the infirm, and the senile. Looking to the future it is to be hoped that successful preventive medicine will be able to permit more of the elderly to live in their own homes for a longer period. The contribution of the Church can be made with greater emphasis on

sheltered housing and flatlets, while still maintaining Homes with more facilities for supervised care and nursing services. With an increase in the numbers of those over 75 years it is reasonable to predict that there will be a considerable need for this kind of service. The Church will always work in close association with the local authority, but in this age of ecumenicity there is a great opportunity for the Churches to work together in serving the elderly. The very considerable problems of finance and staffing, likely to grow more acute in the future, make it desirable that the combined resources of the various denominations be applied to meet the situation where increased nursing care and special facilities are necessary.

In conclusion, it may be possible for the Churches to play their part in Foster Home Care for the elderly when families are unable to play their part in caring for elderly relatives. Schemes of this kind which have been promoted by local authorities include the payment of the 'home-maker' up to £12-£14 per week. Applicants are vetted by the Social Work department before an old person is allotted to them, and some supervision of the placement follows until a satisfactory adjustment has been made. The foster home is most useful for the person who needs social relationships which he cannot develop himself if he lives alone. The home should make him feel part of the family group, assure him status, meet his needs for recognition, and give him a feeling of being wanted as well as being useful. One possible source for such homes may be those of people who themselves are only 5-10 years from retirement. Although they have brought up their families, many still maintain the same house in which the children grew up, thus providing adequate space and

accommodation. The Church could appeal to members in this kind of situation to consider the needs of the elderly which can be met by this kind of caring ministry exercised through the home.

Design of the Questionnaire - Section A

Summary

In this chapter we have argued that a ministry to the aging is not confined to the establishment of church programmes for the elderly within the organisational life of the local Church, but must seek to promote the fullest cooperation with the social welfare agencies in order that the elderly may play their part as members of the community in which they belong. In church programmes and community interests the elderly can participate with other age-groups, and so make their contribution to community welfare. Although residential homes are likely to cater increasingly for the ailing old, it is evident that the Church of Scotland is in the process of changing its policy regarding eventide homes so that a greater priority may be given to sheltered housing.

Before we proceed to the subject matter of the research, the next chapter will outline the composition and background of the questionnaire.

(2) how many of the respondents had experience of or association with church organisations or activities.

(3) their private devotional life, with particular reference to personal prayer and Bible-reading, which would be recorded in three categories, namely, 'regular' (daily), 'occasional' (monthly or less), and 'never'.

CHAPTER 4

THE COMPOSITION AND BACKGROUND OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Design of the Questionnaire - Section A

In this chapter the composition of the questionnaire is described, and following the three-fold division of the questionnaire this has been set out for convenience in three sections. The opportunity has been taken to introduce as background material to the questionnaire certain topics which are covered in the subject matter of the survey. These include church attendance, the crisis of bereavement and its pastoral care, and the popular hopes and fears concerning the 'last things' in eschatological belief. Finally, as an appendix to the chapter the actual questionnaire used in the interview programme is included for information.

The design of the questionnaire took shape after the three main hypotheses had been formulated. For convenience, it was divided into three sections. In the 1st Section, A, the questions were devised in order to assess:

- (1) how their church attendance in the present compared with the past (including youth), and also to examine the practice of members of their family in this respect.
- (2) how many of the respondents had experience of or association with church organisations or activities.
- (3) their private devotional life, with particular reference to personal prayer and Bible-reading, which would be recorded in three categories, namely, 'regular' (daily), 'occasional' (monthly or less), and 'never'.

(4) how far they listened to or viewed radio/television religious programmes.

(5) the extent to which they received visits from family, friends, and neighbours, with an additional enquiry regarding the visits of young people and the Church. This was recorded in the categories of 'regular' (weekly or less) and 'occasional' (monthly or less) or never. They were also asked to answer the question if they thought the Church could do more for old people, and, if possible, to specify areas of particular concern.

(6) finally, how far they registered contentment in old age; and the scale extended from 'more content', 'the same', to 'less content'.

A further question sought to determine the extent of feelings of isolation with the grading of the answers covering a positive expression of isolation to 'sometimes' and 'never'.

Thus the questions were phrased in the following way:

(1) How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

Do members of your family go to Church?

(2) What kind of church activities do you participate in, or have joined in the past?

Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

(3) How regularly do you say prayers?

Do you read the Bible?

(4) Do you listen to or view radio/T.V. religious programmes?

(5) Do you have regular visits from family, friends or neighbours?

Does this include young people?

Do members of the Church visit you?

Do you think the Church could do more for old people?

(6) Do you feel more contented as you grow older?

Do you feel cut off from the society around you?

In the light of the hypothesis which seeks to test whether people become more religious as they get older, it will be seen that questions 1-4 are directly related to an estimate of the religiosity of the respondents. However it was considered useful to introduce questions 5-6 in this section in order to seek additional information on the nature of the support that the elderly received, and further to examine the relationship between religiosity and contentment and also isolation.

(a) Brief survey of church attendance in Scotland

An important question in this section relates to church attendance. It might be assumed that the elderly, who are the subject of this investigation, grew up in a climate of opinion and practice which was most favourable to church attendance. On the face of it this seems to be true, and it is popularly thought to have been just as true further back into the last century. G.D.Henderson states there is evidence that Church-going was not always and everywhere so general as is sometimes supposed.

"In the later 18th century and early 19th century there were definitely Churches where the usual congregation consisted of not more than a tenth of the membership. On the other hand we have J.B. Lockhart's description of Edinburgh on a Sunday morning (c.1827), the silent streets till the kirk bells began, and then the hurrying crowds in their best attire, a strong sense of religious obligation throughout respectable society." 1

1. Henderson, G.D., The Claims of the Church of Scotland (Hodder & Stoughton, 1951), p. 161.

1. Howie, R., The Churches and the churchless in Scotland: Facts and Figures (David Bryce & Son, Glasgow, 1893), p.xxii. See also Introductory Statement, pp. xvii-xxiv.

Statements as to church attendance in different places and periods are often not convincing, but there is evidence that although religion did play an important part in the organisation and life of the large Victorian cities, there is a downward trend of religiosity, measured by church attendance, from the time of the 1851 Census. In the period 1851-91, following the Government Census of 1851, there were a series of census figures for the years 1876, 1881 and 1891, taken by different bodies in different parts of Scotland. Special stress is laid on the numbers in actual attendance at the best-attended service of worship. While figures of the main denominations showed an increase in the number of members, there is a very clear indication that the numbers attending worship on the basis of the best-attended service have declined over this period. As an example, one can quote the decrease on the basis of attendance per 1,000 of the population in the case of the 3 main Presbyterian Churches - the Established Church, the Free Church, and the United Presbyterian Church, as 221.8 in 1876 and 154.5 in 1891, where the increase in membership had risen from 246.2 in 1876 to 260.4 in 1891. Further the attendance for all denominations per 1,000 of the population was returned as 326.7 in 1851, but it decreased to 265.7 in 1876, to 233.1 in 1881, and finally to 192.2 in 1891. So the compiler of these figures expressed the most critical conclusion by saying:

"Even after making due allowance for the different states of weather on the dates when the different enumerations took place, they reveal a state of matters in regard to church attendance in Scotland very startling and very humiliating to all the Churches and to all Christians!" 1

1. Howie, R., The Churches and the churchless in Scotland: Facts and Figures (David Bryce & Son, Glasgow, 1893), p.xxii. See also Introductory Statement, pp. xvii-xxiv.

Little has been recorded about church attendance since this period, and the voluntary question about attendance at places of public worship in the 1851 census has not been repeated. The Glasgow attendance census taken by John Highet over 3 consecutive Sundays at the same period in each of the years 1954, 1955 and 1956, had a before/after experimental feature, in that it attempted to assess the effect of a Billy Graham Crusade, which took place in that city in 1955.¹ A further census was undertaken in the late 1950's, when a sample survey was carried out of eight of Scotland's major denominations with the addition of a number of smaller church groups or sects. In this case a form containing questions about attendance was sent to a sample of ministers and lay representatives throughout Scotland and over 500 submitted answers to the questions. The ministers were asked to give the average attendance at their Sunday morning, afternoon and evening services of public worship in normal conditions, and they were asked also to provide an estimate of the numbers normally attending a subsequent service in addition to an earlier one. The returns indicated that on an average Sunday in 1959, 22.8% of the Presbyterian Church membership attended at least one service of public worship, and this constituted 13.5% of the adult population. When the figures for the other Protestant Churches plus the Roman Catholic Church are added, then there is an increase registering 44% of church membership, representing 26% of the adult population. The figures for Presbyterian membership, expressed as a percentage of the adult population in 1959, came to 39.1% (and its membership accounted

1. Highet, J., "Making Sense of Religious Statistics" (Lecture No.3), Field Studies in Religious Sociology (University of Birmingham, 1966).

for two-thirds of total Scottish membership of the Churches, including Roman Catholic), and the total figure for all main religious denominations came to 59.2%.¹

It is difficult to make any comparison with the 1851-91 figures when the survey of the 1950's was calculated on the adult population, and with the additional problem of having only scant information regarding Howie's procedures. However P.L.Sissons in his research for the Church of Scotland estimates that "when the church membership statistics are considered over a long period the percentage of the population belonging to the churches at the present time is probably larger than it was a hundred years ago."² In fact he goes on to quote the Howie study which suggests that the percentage of church members in Falkirk in 1967 was greater than the percentage of church members in 1891. While this may be true, it does not follow that church attendance has increased, and it might be wiser to generalise that it has shown a decline but not to the extent that people might have imagined. It is of interest in this connection that those filling up the Hight questionnaire were asked to say how attendance in the period between the wars, and the mid-1950's, compared with the time of the survey.³ There was little evidence of a marked decline as compared with the former, and a remarkable similarity between the

-
1. Hight, J., The Scottish Churches (Skeffington, London, 1960) pp. 59-69.
 2. Sissons, P.L., The Social Significance of Church Membership in the Burgh of Falkirk (The Church of Scotland, 1973), pp. 54-5.
 3. Hight, The Scottish Churches, pp. 62-4.

(1) The respondent was asked to identify a crisis situation which had affected them deeply, and when support was necessary. This was

mid-1950's and the survey of the late 1950's. What is very clear to observers is that the decade of the 60's has shown a far more serious rate of decline in attendance figures which has gone with a decline in total church membership.

In all the authorities quoted in this section we do not have any information on the proportion of the elderly compared with other age groups in the percentages of regular church attenders. It is assumed that the elderly form a large and consistent body of church goers, and it is part of the present study to determine, as far as the sample goes, how far the elderly have either increased their religious observances or maintained them over the greater part of their lives.

Design of the Questionnaire - Section B

In the 2nd section, B, the questions were devised in order to assess:-

- (1) personal adjustment in a crisis situation. After determining the nature of the situation, the respondent was asked to describe his/her feelings at the time and how far they were successful in making an adjustment to the new situation.
 - (2) who gave the greatest support in this process of adjustment, and in what way, if any, the Church helped.
 - (3) how men or women were able to cope with the 'crisis' of retirement, and in the case of widows how their husbands reacted to the change.
- Thus the questions were eventually phrased as follows:-

- (1) The respondent was asked to identify a crisis situation which had affected them deeply, and when support was necessary. This was

recorded in the following way, detailing (a) nature of the crisis, (b) the time, and (c) reaction at the time.

(2) Can you remember who gave you the greatest support?

(3) In what way, if any, did the Church help?

(4) How did you adjust to the new situation?

(5) Did you find retirement difficult to accept?

or, in the case of widows, how did their husbands react?

In stating the hypothesis that religious faith and practice plays an important part in the personal adjustment of the elderly, we understood adjustment, in this connection, to refer to personal crisis history, which in the majority of cases involved bereavement, and also retirement. As some consideration has been given to the question of retirement in a previous section, it is important at this stage to give some background information on the crisis of bereavement and also suggest certain guidelines in the pastoral care of the bereaved.

(a) The crisis of bereavement

The death of someone who has played an important and significant part in a person's life is a shattering experience. Whatever is believed concerning the after-life, death brings a sharp earthly separation. The whole pattern of earthly life has been disturbed, and this is a painful experience. J. Hinton, in a chapter on reactions to bereavement comments:

"After a person has died those who knew and loved him continue to suffer. Even if death has been anticipated for a long time, when it finally comes there is a resurgence of grief. The immediate reactions of the bereaved will not be limited to those of straightforward sorrow. The death will arouse

in them a great turmoil of emotions and give rise to wide variations in behaviour in different people." 1

This is true for people have different temperaments and there are varying degrees of bereavement. But there are characteristic symptoms which appear in the majority of cases, and they occur so often that they can be described as the normal reactions to bereavement. E. Lindemann² found 5 such characteristic symptoms based on a study of bereaved people. He listed them under the headings of Somatic distress; Preoccupation with the image of the deceased; Feelings of guilt; Hostile reactions; and Loss of patterns of conduct. This set of headings is present in the description of the ten stages of 'good grief' which G.E. Westberg developed in his sermon 'The Christian and Grief' delivered at the Rockefeller Chapel, Chicago.³ In this case we have first, shock, then emotional release, depression and isolation, physical symptoms of distress, constant preoccupation with the loss, sense of guilt, hostility and resentment, inability to return to usual activities, gradual awareness of the unreality of present attitudes, and, finally, readjustment to reality. These various stages have been worked out by various writers with variations on the general plan or outline presented by Lindemann. From the Christian point of view the experience of bereavement involves people not only in a psychological crisis but also in a crisis of faith. Not only do

1. Hinton, J., Dying (Penguin Books, 1967), p. 167.

2. Lindemann, E., "Symptomatology and management of acute grief", American Journal of Psychiatry, 1944, 101.

3. Smucker, D.E. (comp.), Rockefeller Chapel Sermons (University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp.177-187.

mourners express feelings of regret and guilt about some of the things they did not do for their loved one when he was alive or the things that they did do, but also they may express hostility toward anyone who cared for him in his terminal illness. In a religious person this can be reflected in their attitude to God. J. Hinton says: "Rather than turn to God when a loved one dies, a few turn away from Him, for if God can permit such a death to occur He will no longer be their God."¹ In this connection it is worthwhile to recall the words of C.S. Lewis after the death of his wife:

"Where is God?.....go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is in vain, and what do you find? a door slammed in your face, and a sound of bolting on the inside....The consolation I dread is not 'So there's no God after all', but 'So this is what God's really like. Deceive yourself no longer!'" 2

While it could be argued that the experience of bereavement as suffered by C.S. Lewis was not exactly typical, yet in the nature of his reaction, and the way it threatened to distort, or even, destroy his faith, we can see something which faces the Christian in bereavement. J.G. Davies³ believes that the death of a loved one can be an authentic experience of death for the bereaved.

"Indeed the loneliness and sense of abandonment that characterize the major portion of the account (with reference to C.S. Lewis, quoted above) are evidence in support of my statement that the death of a loved one can be an authentic experience of death for the bereaved. There is emptiness and the loss of any sense of the divine presence." 4

1. Hinton, Dying, p. 169.

2. Lewis, C.S., (under the pseudonym, Clerk, N.W.), A Grief Observed, (Faber & Faber, 1961) p.9.

3. Davies, J.G., Every Day God (S.C.M.Press, 1973).

4. Ibid., p. 183.

Whatever may be true of the biological, in the personal realm it means that death is experienced as an enemy (the 'last enemy' of Christian doctrine), and when the loved one dies we feel in ourselves the onslaught of that enemy. In this case the bereaved could feel that their faith was undergoing crucifixion, and in the Cross they might surmise that the same thing happened to Christ ("My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Matt. ch.27:46). In the experience of many it does not make it easier to understand, but it makes it possible to bear it, and to believe that God is holding on to us when we can no longer hold on to Him. For Christian belief the whole story lies in the eventual transformation of the Crucifixion by the event of the Resurrection. God's vindication of His Son's suffering, sacrifice and death is announced in the victory over death, evil and sin. The crisis of faith is transformed into the assurance of victory over death and the life-hereafter, and the successful working through the stages of grief results in a readjustment to reality. It is not a case of 'becoming our old selves again', or 'getting over' bereavement; rather we are different people through our experience of grief. If our faith is strengthened in the light of a resurrection experience, then the bereaved is better able to help a neighbour through experiences similar to their own through which they have just passed.

In the light of the crisis of faith that many people experience - and also the various stages of grief that have been outlined, the pastoral care of the bereaved requires the minister to assist the person in the working out of grief and their adjustment within the

life of the family and community. In this connection it is possible to formulate certain guidelines which can shape this ministry to the bereaved, although recommendations on this subject of the ministry to the bereaved will be taken up in the final chapter.

(b) Guidelines for the pastoral care of the bereaved

In the first place, it is necessary to affirm the finality of death and the reality of separation. It may be natural for people who are confronted with death to go through the motions of denying its presence. In fact in modern life there is a tendency to assist the bereaved to escape from the reality under a mistaken idea that this is helpful. But the minister does not help by encouraging this tendency to avoid the pain and distress of separation. Rather he should support the person to affirm the loss and the pain as this comes to consciousness gradually in the period following the actual death of the loved one. Biblical teaching speaks of man as a unity of body, soul and spirit, and, in consequence, there is no part of man that is by nature immortal or escapes death. So when the New Testament speaks of the resurrection, it conceives of a resurrection of the whole man, namely a resurrection of the body. St. Paul strongly insisted that in the future life we shall possess 'spiritual bodies', and christian belief has held that by resurrection we shall retain our personal identity. By making this kind of emphasis the minister can gradually move the bereaved's concentration from the vision of the possible agony or suffering prior to death to the risen life of the complete personality of the beloved. There is a

further point of emphasis that the New Testament bases its belief in human survival on the character of God, and not on speculations about the natural immortality of the 'soul'. J.S. McEwen¹ comments on this point:

"By insisting that in the future life we shall have 'bodies', Christianity declares that we shall retain our personal identity, and forbids us to trifle with ideas of 'absorption into the life of God'. To hold such an idea would be not only to insult the dignity of our own personalities: it would also be to ignore the absolute distinction between God the Creator and man the creature - a distinction which is eternal and can never be obliterated." 2

Of course the minister will be aware of the fact that in some places in the New Testament we find the idea that the dead sleep until the general resurrection; while in others we find the hope that the blessed life begins immediately beyond death. Certain New Testament scholars, including O. Cullmann, have held the position that our bodies will not rise immediately after death, but only at the end of time. They argue that scriptural texts like, Luke ch.23:43; ch.16:22; Phil.ch.1:23, do not support the idea that those who die in Christ before the Parousia are immediately clothed with a resurrection-body. There is only one body already raised up and existing in soma pneumatikon, that of Christ, who is thus the firstborn from the dead. By His resurrection the decisive victory over death has already been won. While death still has power over man, it has already decisively lost its omnipotence. Yet although death is already conquered, it will only be annihilated

1. McEwen, J.S., Why we are Christians (Church of Scotland publications, Saint Andrew Press, 1970).

2. Ibid., p.70.

at the end of time as 'the last enemy' (see 1 Cor. ch.15:26; Rev. ch.20:13), and the Holy Spirit will transform bodies of flesh into spiritual bodies. In taking account of the other strand of tradition in the New Testament, for example, Luke ch.23:43, they go on to say that belonging to Christ has consequences also for those who 'sleep'; that is, through the Spirit they will be 'with the Lord' already during the intermediate period between death and the Parousia - which is described as 'sleep' (1 Thess. ch.4:13) or as a place of privilege 'under the altar' (Rev. ch.6:9). In this way they seek to fuse the two traditions, and so make it possible for the believer to find comfort and assurance in the eternal verities.

So while it is necessary to affirm the finality of death and the reality of separation, the Christian gospel helps the bereaved to move on to an assurance concerning the eternal destiny of the departed. But also this destiny is bound up with the redemption of the whole 'cosmos' in the Parousia, and he is redeemed as part of the corporate whole to which he belongs, and in which he is a true individual personality. In that 'last day' he really and fully 'puts on the Lord Jesus Christ' to become a perfected member of the Body of Christ.

If the bereaved are able to accept death's finality and the victory of the resurrection, then secondly, they will be able to mourn. The minister's pastoral work with the bereaved is to encourage mourning, so that an important aspect of the funeral is to facilitate emotional release.¹

1. Clinebell, H.J.(Jr.), Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling (Abingdon Press, 1966).

"The service should emphasize, among other things, the reality of the loss and the appropriateness of mourning. It should use familiar hymns, prayers, and scripture which may help to release dammed-up feelings. A funeral meditation on a text such as "Blessed are those who mourn" may help to facilitate mourning. Nothing should be said which suggests that stoicism in the face of grief is a Christian virtue or that one whose faith is genuine will not experience penetrating grief." 1

It is not easy in our own country to express genuine emotion in a funeral service, and naturally the minister is concerned about the possibility of uncontrollable grief. But it is true, as L.O.Mills² has said that ministers can play a part in suppressing the act of mourning "by 'keeping it brief' and often selecting his scripture and preparing his sermon with the goal of not arousing feelings.... indicating that a stoic and unfeeling acceptance of death is somehow more Christian."³ The minister should encourage the development of an atmosphere in the funeral in which mourning is acceptable, and the choice of scripture, the content of prayers and the words of address should present the reality of death with the comfort of the scriptures - and all within the living assurance of the Resurrection victory over death. It is interesting to recall how many people can speak afterwards with conviction and gratitude of the help given in mourning at the time of the funeral service. But of all the services that a minister may take it still remains a difficult assignment, and certainly demands the most careful thought and preparation if it is to become a real help and assurance to the bereaved.

1. Ibid., p. 277. 169

2. Mills, L.O. (edit.), Perspectives on Death (Abingdon Press, 1969).

3. Ibid., p.277.

Of course most bereaved people need the minister's private as well as public ministrations. In the light of all we know about the grief process it seems certain that most of the bereaved would welcome the private conversation with a minister when they could make real their sense of loss and express their sorrow. For in the weeks and months after the funeral the person enters further stages of 'grief work' when they are likely to experience deeper levels of loss. We tend to imagine that people get over these difficulties provided they are given time, but this is not true. We forget that many experience feelings of resentment, anger, and guilt, and unless these are faced as normal elements of the grief process with helpful counselling then it is likely that the grief wound will not heal. In fact as H.J. Clinebell Jr., has said:

"the grief wound cannot heal fully until one has accepted the reality of the loss, has surrendered, to some degree, one's emotional tie to and investment in the lost person, and has begun to form other relationships to provide new sources of emotional food." 1

This leads us, thirdly, to the importance of the supporting fellowship of the Church in this process of resuming old or forming new relationships. If the fellowship acts as true community then it is not so likely that loneliness or isolation will prevent the true working through of grief. It is sad to find former members of the Church cut off from the congregation after a bereavement, when understanding care and close fellowship could have served to renew the purpose and meaning of their lives. If it is true that

1. Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling, pp. 170-1.

the person who is most valued at the time of bereavement is not the one who expresses the most sympathy, but the person who quietly helps with day-to-day household tasks and makes few demands upon the bereaved; then it is also true that, later on, members of the congregation can demonstrate their confidence in, and affection for, the bereaved by supporting him to work out the meaning of his new life. So often the bereaved are neglected out of a sense of embarrassment that they may begin to imagine themselves as something unclean and different. They need patient and loving friends who stand beside them while they learn to live and love again.

Design of the Questionnaire - Section C

In the 3rd section, C, the questions were devised in order to determine:

(1) whether older people have a fear of getting old. We are led to believe that some young people, and probably more middle-aged, have this fear; but is it true that for the elderly related to the irrational fear of death is the fear of growing old by which even more people in our culture are haunted?

(2) whether older people have a fear of death. As mentioned previously in the survey of research and literature, this question has posed many problems and the answers have not always been considered satisfactory. It seemed necessary to probe deeper and try to find out if the fear of death really meant a fear of the process of dying. For example, a respondent answered: "I am old enough to face the fact that I cannot live for ever. I am not afraid of death, but I admit to a certain fear of the process of

dying." In an attempt to arrive at an honest assessment further questions were asked as to whether the respondents had been close to death in their lives and if they were afraid at the time, and also how far they had been affected by some other person's death (with the exception of anyone referred to in section B).

(3) whether older people have a belief in an After-life, and if this means that they also believe in a reunion with dear ones who have previously died. Is it true that most elderly people share "a common form of ordinary hope, namely that people survive death in some higher realm, but not necessarily oriented towards God or concern for salvation?" Is it true that they "want to meet their loved ones in the beyond, even if they are not specially concerned with religion, worship, piety or contemplation?"¹ This writer suggests, in this connection, there is a popular concept of heaven as being simply the place of survival among loved ones.

(4) whether older people believe in a Judgment after death, and if this is accompanied by a belief in some form of eternal punishment for those who fail the eternal judgment. These questions were included on the assumption that many of the respondents would remember the particular emphasis made by preachers on these subjects when they were younger. Did they accept or reject this teaching or preaching as "hazardous to talk about God punishing" or contrary to their basic understanding of the Christian Gospel. Or would their doctrine of hell, if they believed in it, be "a model rather

1. Smart, N., "Concept of Heaven" (14) in Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures, Vol. 2., Talk of God (Macmillan, 1969), pp. 232-3.

of separation than punishment?"¹

In the light of the above the questions were phrased as follows:

- (1) Do you fear getting older?
- (2) Do you fear death, or the process of dying?
- (3) Have you ever been close to death?
and were you afraid at the time?
- (4) Have you ever been affected by some other person's death?
- (5) Do you believe in an after-life?
and do you believe in reunion with loved ones after death?
- (6) Do you believe in judgment at the end of your life on earth?
and does this mean some form of eternal punishment to follow
for those who fail the judgment?

(a) Popular hopes and fears concerning the 'last things' in the light of traditional and modern theology

It is not the purpose of the writer to present a full statement on the development of the doctrine of Christian eschatology, but it did seem to be essential that some reference should be made to popular hopes and fears concerning the 'last things' in the light of traditional and modern theological understanding. J. Hick² suggests that there are two major alternative theological frameworks within which the Christian belief in an after-life has developed, and they have tended to produce two rather different attitudes to death. The

1. Ramsey, S., "Hell" (13) in *Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures*, Vol. 2., Talk of God (Macmillan, 1969), p. 223.

2. Hick, J., "Towards a Christian Theology of Death" in Cope, G., (edit.), Dying, Death and Disposal (S.P.C.K., London, 1970).

first, and the most dominant tradition in Western Christianity until modern times, is what he calls the Augustinian theology where death is considered as a punishment and held to be the wages of sin. This was an elaboration of the Pauline theology, and presented the Christian conscience with a drama of salvation which began with the fall of man and ended with the division of humanity into the saved and the damned, segregated in heaven and hell. But, he argues, there has also been in theological thought a very different picture of human life as a pilgrimage, with bodily death as the end of one stage of that pilgrimage with the promise of entry to another stage of fulfilment in eternal destiny. He speaks of this as the Irenaean type of theology, which can be traced through strands of Eastern Christianity to the early Hellenistic Fathers and developed more fully in the modern period, and on this view sees our mortality in relation to a positive divine purpose of love whereby man realizes the potentialities of his nature in a further life beyond bodily death. To elaborate on this theme, J. Hick explains further:

"Death does not have the absolute significance that it has in the Augustinian theology as the moment when the individual's eternal destiny is irrevocably decided. In that tradition the soul as it is at the moment of bodily death faces a definitive divine judgement and receives either the gracious gift of eternal life or the just wages of eternal death. But this traditional picture has to be criticized in the light of modern biological, psychological, and sociological knowledge. The conditions of a person's life as these are determined by his biological inheritance, and by the influence of the family and the wider social matrix upon his early development, are often such as to make it virtually impossible that God's purpose for the individual will be fulfilled in this life. It would be intolerably unjust for such a victim of adverse circumstances to be eternally penalized. From

the Christian premise of the goodness and love of God we must accordingly infer continued human life beyond death leading eventually to the far-distant fulfilment of the purpose for which we exist." 1

He states quite clearly that Christianity is committed to belief in a life after death, but he favours the 'pilgrimage' attitude to death where this pilgrimage is seen to attain its final end, not in this life, but in a future life where God's purpose is fulfilled and finally revealed. It goes without saying that a great deal of the modern theological thinking on the themes of eschatology have more sympathy with this view and are largely critical of the traditional position.

But it is true to say that popular hopes and fears that people may hold as far as the 'last things' are concerned have just as much in common with the traditional view-point as with a more modern understanding. We propose to consider some of these in the following pages.

(i) Fears concerning death

In speaking of popular fears regarding death, even though the Christian has the Resurrection faith as a basic assurance, many people have a fear of death for a number of different reasons. There is a simple dread of the unknown. There is a deeply-seated instinct that man deserves to die; which could be described as the 'sting of death' and introduces a combination of guilt and anxiety. Further there is an awareness that man is confronted by a mystery, for he

1. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

does not know what it means for him to die - as this is a dimension totally beyond his comprehension. Then there is the fear - even if others have been overcome - of being torn from those who are close to us and need us most. If these fears are to be answered then the Christian case must rest on the truth of the Easter message. D. Bonhoeffer¹ felt this so strongly during his imprisonment that he wrote:

"Easter? We are paying more attention to dying than to death. We are more concerned to get over the act of dying than to overcome death. Socrates mastered the art of dying; Christ overcame death as 'the last enemy' (1 Cor. ch.15:26). There is a real difference between the 2 things; the one is within the scope of human possibilities, the other means resurrection. It is not from ars moriendi, the art of dying, but from the resurrection of Christ, that a new and purifying wind can blow through our present world." 2

But there is still the problem of the fear, anxiety, and guilt associated with death which Christian teaching attempts to answer. As far as the New Testament is concerned, the Christian Faith firmly links death to sin. Biblical teaching states that man has lost immortality because he has sinned, and so separated himself from God. The anxiety, fear, and mystery of death is related to the corruption of his original status as one made in the image of God and eventually destined for everlasting union with his Creator. This sinfulness of man is not just an individual matter, but he has come to realise that this is a vital aspect of his solidarity with all mankind. Christian teaching is emphatic that death is a reality; but if man

1. Bonhoeffer, D., Letters and Papers from Prison (enlarged edition), Bethge, E. (edit.), (SCM Press, 1971).

2. Ibid., p. 240.

dies the death that sin decrees, then there is the promise that he will rise again as a part of the redeemed humanity made possible by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In so far as he knows this to be true, then the fear of death cannot terrorize or enslave him. He will experience Christ in His risen power here and now, as the evangelist John expressed it in his gospel, and know the assurance of fulfilment in the hereafter.

It should be obvious that fear or anxiety regarding death will not succeed in frightening men into believing in eternal life. What in fact has really happened in modern times is that death is not mentioned or denied. So we have the situation where the conspiracy of silence prevents man from even discussing death, so that understanding in terms of the Christian Faith is even more difficult to achieve. Where it is possible to overcome this fear and banish the conspiracy of silence on the subject, there is still the fear of being separated from those whom we love. This often means that the death which is feared most is not our own. The fear is not so much for death itself, but an anxiety for the people we love and dread being apart from them. So it may be the effect our death will have upon someone we love, or that they may die first and we will suffer the consequent loneliness and bereavement. A. Schweitzer¹ believed that there was something deep and sanctifying when people who belong to each other share the thought that each day, each coming hour, may separate them. He suggested that we can overcome this fear by

1. Schweitzer, A., Reverence for Life (S.P.C.K., London, 1970) pp. 67ff.

regarding our lives and those dear to us as though we had already lost them in death, only to receive them back for a while. As in the Pauline affirmation, those who belong to the Lord can share with Him in spiritual experience, both here and now, His death and resurrection to new life. So those who overcome the fear of death believe in eternal life because it is a present possession and experience, and they even benefit from its peace and joy in the now of this present life.

In answer to the fear of death as representing the greatest uncertainty, literal descriptions of a life of heavenly bliss or eternal punishment are not greatly appreciated by modern man. Mary Stott,¹ the journalist, wrote an article on the fear of death following a writers' Summer School at Swanwick in 1972, where she commented: "First, we lost the fear of hell; then we lost the hope of heaven. Heaven, in fact, is now regarded as rather a joke, - all those white clad angels perpetually harping and belting out a kind of Handelian oratorio." She goes on to say that the loss of belief in any kind of survival has made it more difficult for many to accept the idea of death - not so much for ourselves, as for those we love, and has affected our attitude towards aging. She believes that the overwhelming consensus of present-day opinion is that death is release into oblivion (she quotes J.B. Priestley, "Death as a falling asleep for ever, as a giant never-failing sleeping pill, with everything over and done with at last"), but

1. Stott, M., "World without end, Amen?" in Woman's Guardian (pub. Thurs., Sept. 7th, 1972).

she personally rebels against the idea of life narrowing to extinction point without any sense of ultimate meaning or purpose. If religion has not disappeared as many thought it would, then the answer seems to be in the fact of death, which without religion in some form can only make complete nonsense of the whole human enterprise. The Christian answer to the unknownness of death is not to attempt to give literal descriptions or even poetic ones, but to follow the example of the Apostle Paul and rest content with the knowledge that the Companionship of Christ means that we will not be left alone at death. With such a faith and personal commitment it follows that the unknownness of death will not trouble him. Because he has this commitment as a present experience, he believes that it will not be broken. In this kind of faith many believers, even in the present day, have lived their lives with assurance and hope. The writer believes that the evidence presented in this thesis concerning certain elderly people is confirmation of such a faith.

(ii) Fears concerning judgment and hell

When we turn to judgment and hell, it would appear that preaching on such themes has either changed or barely receives a mention in the present age. The older members of our community do have memories of a different state of affairs, and one journalist recorded an interview with a very old man who remembered the days when 'hell was real'! "He made hell so real - as did all the preachers then, and we listened to scores of them - that a large part of my childhood was fearsomely enlivened by the crackling and sizzling of infernal fires. The devil took on a hundred different

forms to tempt us. All that has changed. Where is hell now? Where is heaven for that matter? I don't claim it was better then, only it was very different."¹ In the traditional scheme of christian eschatology death was the time of 'particular judgment' when the future destiny of the one who died was settled or ratified. There was no possibility of repentance after death; there was either the sending to eternal damnation of the evil man or the preparation of the good man for a final heavenly state (either the 'intermediate state' of purgatory or the time of 'sleep' or waiting until the final consummation). Yet it can be safely said that no doctrine in christian thought has been so widely criticised as the doctrine of judgment leading to eternal damnation. The reasons why the doctrine remained unchallenged for so long, certainly up to the 17th and 18th centuries, centre on the scriptural authority and also on the firm belief in its value as a deterrent in this life. Concerning the latter it was thought that, if the fear of eternal punishment was removed, most people would behave without any moral restraint and that society would collapse into anarchy. Regarding the crucial texts for the eternity of hell (namely Christ's eschatological discourse in Matt. ch.25., and the lake of fire and brimstone in Rev. chs. 14 and 20), it can be argued that the 'everlasting fire' and 'everlasting punishment' to which Christ says He will send the wicked at the Last Judgment, do not necessarily mean that their torments would be eternal. A good deal of New Testament comment

1. Stewart, P., "The days when hell was real" in Scotsman (pub. Wed., April 11th, 1973).

2. Walker, D.P., The Decline of Hell (Routledge & University of Chicago, 1964).

and criticism suggests that Jesus did not concentrate on the active images of torment, but is more frequently recorded as using those of exclusion from joy in regret. Most of the gospel material on this theme is found in Matthew, and it is suggested that the pre-occupations of Judaism tend to distort the presentation of Jesus. In the case of the 'fire and brimstone' of Revelation, commentators believe they are not to be taken literally, any more than John's other symbols; and, in fact, the writer of Revelation did not accept the idea of eternal torment, but believed that, if at the end there should be any who remained impervious to the love of God then they would suffer the second death, that is, extinction and total oblivion.

Some of the greatest theologians of the past had been prepared to say that one of the joys possessed by the blessed in heaven would be to witness the suffering of the damned in hell. This was said to mean that the blessed would rejoice to see God's justice indicated rather than delight in their sufferings. But it also gave them joy because it provided a contrast which heightened their awareness of their own bliss. Scriptural warrant for this view has suggested that since Dives could see Lazarus in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke ch.16:14-31), there is every reason to suppose that Lazarus could see Dives. But in any case the teaching of this parable indicates that Jesus made use of a well-known story to illuminate certain truths about the Kingdom of God and not to give a preview of life after death. But a change came about in the attitude to other people's sufferings in the late 17th Century and early 18th Century as D.P. Walker¹ indicates in his study, and closely

1. Walker, D.P., The Decline of Hell (Routledge & University of Chicago, 1964).

connected with this is a tendency to minimize, or even occasionally to reject, retributive or vindictive justice.

"The two are closely connected because, as long as we accept the validity of retributive justice, we must also approve of other people's suffering when it is deserved, and we may well regard any pity for them as moral weakness." 1

But even when the eternity of hell was questioned it was still felt that some period of torment should be retained in order to preserve a deterrent. With this idea there went the notion that a reversal of fortunes would be necessary and just at the end, rather in line with the words of the parable quoted above (Luke ch.16:25), "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted and thou art tormented." But this idea of 'fairness' in the after-life presupposes that, at least in this life, sin brings joy and virtue suffering; while it is just as likely that the opposite assumption holds that sin brings its own punishment.

But most people who hold a doctrine of hell either do so because of a literal belief in certain scriptures on the subject or else they hold on to the notion that man's evil and cruelty must be punished and God's justice vindicated. But the reaction which set in and almost eliminated this doctrine from people's belief was brought about by setting this doctrine against the revealed Love and Forgiveness of God in Jesus Christ. For that reason most people could not reconcile this picture of God with the torments of hell-fire, and the history of the times with changes in social outlook

1. Ibid., p. 30.

and values made for a deeper sense of compassion and concern for suffering humanity in general. The preaching on the theme of hell-fire which was common towards the end of the last century served to be an attempt to frighten people into the Kingdom, but as J.A. Baker¹ has said, "The fear of hell is present in the christian faith only as a fear from which we have been delivered." Of course hell thought of in terms of separation is a possibility for humans who have a choice to do good or evil. But this does not mean that annihilation or torment eternally is inevitable. If it is true that, "for those who have found and loved the true spirit of Man in Jesus, hell is something that could have happened to them but now never can",² then is it not possible that those who have been judged in God's justice and mercy may be reformed and renewed to fulfil the very purpose that He had intended for them from the beginning?

In certain modern theological works^{3,4} we find that eschatological ideas, including hell, are considered as a present phenomenon which can be experienced in varying degrees here and now. But hell is not the result of a punishment but rather the working out of sin as it affects the personal being of the sinner. Hell, in the sense of separation from God, is always a live possibility; for the possibility of wilful alienation from God, and persistence

1. Baker, J.A., The Foolishness of God (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1970).

2. Ibid., p.295.

3. Pittenger, N., The Last Things in a Process Perspective (Epworth Press, 1970).

4. Macquarrie, J., Principles of Christian Theology (S.C.M. Press, 1966).

in that alienation by free decision, is there too. Yet even with this kind of possibility left open, J. Macquarrie refuses to draw a sharp line between the 'righteous' and the 'wicked', and concludes hopefully that the sinner will never get to a point of complete loss or even beyond the reconciling activity of God. In these writers there is utter rejection of the idea of a hell where God everlastingly punishes the wicked without hope of deliverance. Rather they believe that God will never cease from His quest for the universal reconciliation and so bring man to the true and final stage of his pilgrimage from earth to heaven.

(iii) Hope concerning heaven

When we examine the concept of heaven in the history of the modern period, U. Simon¹ shows how the triumph of scientific methods and the establishment of empirical philosophy made heaven an obsolete term. "Thus the paradox came about that man in the infinite universe became earth-centred and himself the measure of all things, as against the medieval man who desired to leave the earth and whose thought was incomplete without heaven."² Yet heaven remained a living symbol and reality for the same humanity which had ceased to believe in its scientific existence. Simon goes on to explain how cosmic consciousness became the heir of pre-scientific celestialism, and the Kantian tradition in philosophy tried to bridge the gulf between the universe of science and the world of moral aspirations. In this heaven is found to be

1. Simon, U., Heaven in the Christian Tradition (Rockliff, 1958).

2. Ibid., p. 22.

complementary to the 'moral law within', for both heaven and the moral law make man truly human by assigning to him a proper place in the universe. He adds that the end of Newtonian physics had not changed the picture. "Thus Einstein, who insisted that Relativity is a purely scientific matter which has nothing to do with religion, encouraged belief in the rational aspect of nature and 'cosmic religion' in a special sense."¹

By the time of the Industrial Revolution the vagueness of the term 'heaven' has become marked, for it may mean anything from unusual happiness to life after death. For many intimately concerned with the industrial process, heaven was thought of in terms of escape from this life and thoughts of this kind abound in the literature and hymns of the period. The themes of consolation and reward are stressed, and the individual is expected to find compensation there for everything that has gone wrong in this life. But the communist criticism with its slogan of 'pie in the sky when you die'; the horror of the first great World War; and further developments in philosophy and science, combined to accelerate the decline in the concept of heaven in the 20th Century. Heaven became a popular but quite meaningless term for millions with books and songs making reference to heaven in connection with fictitious dreams, loves, destinies, and the like.

But traditional beliefs still persist in modern times. Heaven is still - for a minority, a place where virtue is rewarded, the

1. Ibid., p. 26.

end of life attained, and where God's own glorious presence is assured. But are popular fears and hopes regarding heaven really confirmed by the biblical evidence, and does modern theology hold to a concept of heaven in spite of the modern scientific world-view? When Billy Graham preaches on the theme of what heaven is going to be like, he states his personal belief that the Bible teaches that heaven is a literal place. It is not possible to know exactly where it is in the vastness of space, but there must be a meeting place with Jesus Christ according to His promise in John ch. 14:3. It is significant that in the synoptic Gospels heaven is never used as the name of the place to which people may go after death. It may refer to the abode of God when used in the descriptions of prayer, but in the teaching of Jesus to be in hell is to be sent out from the presence of God and to be with God is to be indeed in heaven. As far as the text in John ch. 14:3 is concerned, the usual picture of the after-life was of a number of different 'places' to which people would be allotted depending on the virtues or vices they had shown during their life on earth. But faith in Christ meant that the 'place' of Christians would be such that after death they would certainly be with Christ. So the Biblical evidence avoids direct reference to a literal place, but lays emphasis on the nature of the relationship that will transcend death.

D.L. Edwards¹ describes how the scriptures correct many fears and sentimental hopes regarding heaven. A popular fear is that being in heaven would offer no worthwhile activity comparable

1. Edwards, D.L., The Last Things Now (S.C.M. Press, 1969), see pp. 84-8.

with life on earth, and the result in many people's minds is sheer boredom. He answers this by reminding us that the Bible associates the thought of God with the happiest experiences of life - with the joy of the marriage feast and family celebrations, with deliverance from trouble and sickness and the deep sense of fulfilment in human relationships, with peace and victory; and the joy and happiness of our communion with Christ in this life promises a fulfilment of praise and service of everlasting glory in the life to come. We find in Rev.ch.22 a reference to the fruitful and peaceful character of this existence in the heavenly New Jerusalem, which is portrayed in direct contrast to the life on earth. In this picture the redeemed are able to make their homage to God without opposition from the power of evil and fulfilling the purpose of their lives as God ordained from the beginning. If this is true their minds are not filled with the destructions or temptations of a previous existence. They serve, in the liturgical sense, with praise and prayer, and contemplate the Face of God in constant vision (vv. 3-4). The perpetual service of God means the end to all suffering, and above all, the whole past of incomprehensible ills and mysteries will now be resolved (ch. 21:4). In this vision the essence of heaven is to live eternally in the presence of God - the service and the vision of God supplying all that is needed for eternal life. D.L. Edwards also mentions that heaven will surely contain no trace of selfish idleness, even though the Christian hope is that the dead "may rest from their labours" (Rev. ch.14:13) - from all earthly toil, and the pain and frustration associated with it. He offers the suggestion that "the work which the Bible pictures as going on

in heaven is the praise of God for what He is and does. In other words, it is adjustment to the work of God....It may be legitimate for us to think of the dead as being adjusted to God's action, God's work, so that they become parts of it."¹ It can be added that in Revelation we picture the courts of heaven as full of activity because it is all directed to the real end of God's glory. Labour for daily bread in a sin-cursed world is transformed into an offering of thanksgiving where there is perfect harmony and no discords. There can be music in heaven if "the sign of the new life which men shared was that they sang together while they wrought together, because His servants shall then serve Him and not their own ends."²

D.L. Edwards goes on to comment on the way the Bible corrects sentimental hopes concerning heaven. We have already mentioned the popular concept of heaven as a place of survival among loved ones, it is quite significant that the New Testament makes no emphasis on the reunions of families or friends in heaven. Although he quotes from the passage (Mark ch.12:18-27, and in particular v.25, "When they rise from the dead, men and women do not marry - or do not remain married," he believes that the story implies some continuance of the family (in v.26). But he adds:

"The meaning seems to be that while the formation of character and destiny by family life will endure, there will be no exclusive relationships in eternal life...the unity which husband and wife experience in their marriage is to be the reality enjoyed by all. In fact, the New

1. Ibid., p. 86.

2. Welch, A.C., Visions of the End (James Clarke, 1922), p. 248.

Testament prefers to speak of a congregation, not a marriage, as being the best foretaste of heaven, because a congregation is more inclusive and is more clearly based on the worship of God." 1

It must be confessed that the New Testament says little on the relationship between the members of earthly families in Heaven. In fact Jesus has an impatience with the rigidity of narrow family ties which gets in the way of commitment to the 'real family' of the Kingdom. In answer to Peter's statement, "We have left all and followed Thee," Jesus promises His disciples a two-fold recompense: a much wider family on earth, with persecutions, and "in the world to come eternal life." (Mark ch.10:28ff). Here on earth the natural ties of blood and kinship are transcended in the wider community of faith, and eternal life is actually contrasted with the earthly home and family.

When we turn to modern theology, from examples we have already quoted, J. Macquarrie criticises the popular way of talking about heaven as a reward.

"But heaven is not a reward that gets added on to the life of faith, hope and love, rather it is the end of that life, that is, the working out of the life that is oriented by these principles." 2

So there is nothing either mythological or egocentric about heaven, but it is simply the goal of human existence. In much the same way N. Pittenger is critical of the traditional scheme whose imagery is

1. Edwards, The Last Things Now, p. 87.
2. Macquarrie, Principles of Christian Theology, p. 327.

1. Knox, R.A., "Survival after death" in Listener (pub. December 15th, 1955), pp. 1043-4.

misleading because it is purely futuristic in reference and speaks of heaven only as a kind of compensation for the pains and suffering of an earthly existence. Recent theology makes a great deal of the connection between this life and the future life, and those Christians who believe in a future life would find it impossible to believe that the relationship with God in Christ that they have known in this life can be ended by death. But if it is shared with Christ, then it is not surprising that Christians throughout the ages have believed that it will be also shared with those they love. R.A. Knox, in a broadcast, commented on this point: "And it has always been the instinct of Christian people - although so little is said about it in the New Testament - that it will be a shared happiness. It seems incredible that our lives here should be so interwoven, if we were destined to be solitary units in the world to come."¹ But surely incredible too if our relationships in heaven were restricted to purely family units and did not embrace the wider aspects of family that Christ established in His Church on earth.

Summary

The questionnaire was devised under the three main headings of religiosity, adaptation to crisis situations, and eschatological belief. Following a description of the composition of the questionnaire, certain topics were introduced where background material was considered to be of value in the light of the answers

1. Knox, R.A., "Survival after death" in Listener (pub. December 15th, 1955), pp. 1043-4.

of the respondents. This was of particular importance in the crisis of bereavement and the popular hopes and fears of eschatological belief. We now proceed to the subject matter of the research in Part II, which has been organised for presentation under the same three sections (of the questionnaire) covering Chapters 5, 6 and 7. The method adopted in each chapter is to give a full description of the interview material followed by an analysis of the answers with the relevant tables of results. Finally the interpretation considers the results in the light of the sub-hypotheses formulated in connection with the three main hypotheses of the work.

Do members of your family go to Church?

Children -
Grandchildren -

What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in (or have you joined)?

Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

How regularly do you say prayers?

Do you read the Bible?

Do you listen to or view Radio/T.V. religious programmes?

Do you have regular visits from family or friends?

Does this include young people?

Do you have friends in other denominations (Roman Catholics)?

Do members of the Church visit you?

Do you think the Church could do more for Old People?

Do you feel more contented as you grow older?

And do you feel cut off from the Society around you?

NAME/NO.

APPENDIX

AGE

SINGLE

CHILDREN

QUESTIONNAIRE - SURVEY OF THE RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES OF THE ELDERLY

NAME/NO.

RETIREMENT/WIDOW

SEX

AGE

SINGLE

MARRIED

WIDOW

WIDOWS -

ELMS

CHILDREN

GRANDCHILDREN

OCCUPATION

DATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOOD

A

How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

Do members of your family go to Church?

Children -

Grandchildren-

What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in (or have you joined)?

Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

How regularly do you say prayers?

Do you read the Bible?

Do you listen to or view Radio/T.V. religious programmes?

Do you have regular visits from family or friends?

Does this include young people?

Do you have friends in other denominations (Roman Catholics)?

Do members of the Church visit you?

Do you think the Church could do more for Old People?

Do you feel more contented as you grow older?

And do you feel cut off from the Society around you?

NAM/No.

SEX

AGE

SINGLE
MARRIED
WIDOWCHILDREN
GRANDCHILDREN

OCCUPATION

DATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOOD

PRIOR TO WEDDERBURN -
ELMSB

Try to identify a crisis situation when support was necessary

1) Nature of the crisis

2) Time

3) Reaction at the time

Can you remember who gave you the greatest support?

In what way, if any, did the Church help?

How did you adjust to the new situation?

Did you find retirement difficult to accept?

or, in the case of widows, how did their husbands react?

C

Do you fear getting old?

Do you fear death (or the process of dying)?

Have you ever been close to death? and were you afraid at the time?

Have you ever been affected by some other person's death?

Do you believe in an after-life and re-union with dear ones?

Do you believe in Judgement (at the end of our life on earth)?

Does this mean some form of eternal punishment?

CHAPTER 5

RELIGIOSITY OF THE ELDERLY SAMPLE

In this chapter we present the interview material of the first section of the questionnaire (referred to as Section A). In the first place a full description of the answers given to the questions is arranged in such a way that the variety of answers can be appreciated, and allowance made for the fact that certain questions are more fully answered than others while respondents

PART II

- Chapter 5. Religiosity of the Elderly sample
 - Chapter 6. Adaptation to crisis situations in the Elderly sample
 - Chapter 7. Eschatological belief of the Elderly sample
 - Chapter 8. Conclusions and Recommendations
- the sub-hypotheses formulated under the first main hypothesis. Consideration of the three main hypotheses is taken up in the final chapter under the heading of 'conclusions'.

Description of the Interview Material

(a) Church attendance

After reviewing the interview material it emerged that the pattern of church attendance was formed in youth and generally maintained throughout life. In fact the majority of respondents stated that the foundation of attendance was laid in childhood, and many remarked on the way their parents gave them an example by their own church-going with continual reference to the 'family pew' in name and fact. One male respondent said:

CHAPTER 5

RELIGIOSITY OF THE ELDERLY SAMPLE

In this chapter we present the interview material of the first section of the questionnaire (referred to as Section A). In the first place a full description of the answers given to the questions is arranged in such a way that the variety of answers can be appreciated, and allowance made for the fact that certain questions are more fully answered than others while respondents vary in this respect. Following this introduction an analysis of the answers with the relevant tables of results is presented in the order that the questions were originally set out in the questionnaire. Finally the interpretation considers the results in the light of the sub-hypotheses formulated under the first main hypothesis. Consideration of the three main hypotheses is taken up in the final chapter under the heading of 'conclusions'.

Description of the Interview Material

(a) Church attendance

After reviewing the interview material it emerged that the pattern of church attendance was formed in youth and generally maintained throughout life. In fact the majority of respondents stated that the foundation of attendance was laid in childhood, and many remarked on the way their parents gave them an example by their own church-going with continual reference to the 'family pew' in name and fact. One male respondent said:

"I think church-going is a habit, albeit a good one. The initial training I received from my parents left a lasting impression. This was brought out clearly when during the war I became a non-attender owing to Sunday work, and thereafter I drifted away from church attendance. I felt something was missing and when I resumed attendance it was as though my 'early days' came back again."

A female respondent also stressed the church-going habit when she said:

"I have always gone to Church regularly. It was a habit from youth. It always brought us back as a family to the spiritual things of life, and we were enabled to start the new week refreshed."

In the light of this experience from childhood it is significant that only two respondents described a conversion experience going back to their teens. One female respondent stated that she went to Church first only when she was 18 years, and it was when she started attending the Methodist Church that, "I realised for the first time that I was a sinner and in need of salvation." It was another female respondent who described how she became a believer in her teens. "I was always a very good attender previously, but I remember quite vividly the day when I became a believer and committed myself to Christ." In both cases the experience greatly influenced their lives apart from church-going, and in the latter case the respondent was clear that, "the greatest regret I have is in not taking the opportunity of making clear my faith to others during my life. There were times when I could and should have done it, but I let the chance slip." It should also be mentioned that one man described how he rebelled against what was expected of him in youth although he later became a member of the Church after he was married. His parents were not regular church-goers and he came

under the influence of his grandparents who organised his church-going for him. "I can remember well that I thought at the time that it was too much. I played truant from the Evening Services and went away with my friends. Although I did get a girl friend to put my collection in the plate." A number of men, who had service in the Armed Forces during the 1st World War, did specially mention that their experiences in this connection had no effect on faith or church-going. But one recognised the fact that this was not true of many; and in his own case there were other factors including social custom or pressure that applied.

"I know that a lot of chaps didn't go back to the Church after the war. But I returned to a country district and people noticed if you went to Church or not. I think it must have been very different in the town."

For those who had not attended during their middle years men generally excused themselves by making reference to difficult working arrangements in their jobs, and some women instanced periods of their lives when they were nursing sick members of their family. This often referred to elderly parents, and it is interesting to note the cases of single daughters who were able and willing to do this when marriage was denied them following the heavy casualties of the 1st World War. In the case of women they were more likely to return to regular church-going when this kind of situation no longer existed.

The main reason for non-attendance when elderly was definitely sickness or infirmity. For previously regular church attenders this made them most unhappy, and it was only partly relieved by services of private communion in the home and radio/television services. They stressed how much they missed seeing their friends

at Church, and the social factor in attendance was extremely important to them. For those who could continue as regular church-goers it was found that the atmosphere of worship was mentioned quite often in the sense that the fellowship expressed its friendliness to one another. A number commented on their interest in the sermon and children's address, but it was men who brought up points of difficulty in understanding the Biblical exposition in sermons. These difficulties ranged from belief in the miracle stories of the Gospels, the divinity of Christ, to the assurances concerning the After-life. One woman quite emphatically stated that she had been taught to worship God and not the minister, which may have been a reaction against the Presbyterian system. However singing familiar hymns was the most enjoyable aspect of worship mentioned by the majority of the elderly people interviewed.

In the case of non-members it was clear that most of them had had a religious upbringing in their youth. Many had even been church attenders in their middle years but later lapsed, and this had happened quite often after they had moved from their native place or during their working life. Most had just drifted away from the Church, but one spoke of a particular upset in her connection with a congregation that made her reluctant to join another. "I just felt that I would be a hypocrite if I went back to Church. And I didn't." Another woman had a lifelong interest in the Salvation Army, but she did not join the Army because "She never felt good enough for that."

One man even stated his

(b) Prayer and Bible reading

According to the replies, the explanation for the high proportion of those who prayed regularly, that is daily, is found in the teaching and example they received in childhood, and some remembered the family prayers of their youth. It should be added that some indicated a regular practice of prayer in recent years when previously it had only been occasional. For many it was a way of seeking guidance for daily living and they achieved a peace of mind through their prayers. For one woman, "It's like lifting a load from my life when I voice my troubles to him"; and another in local authority affairs found guidance in the course of her work, "I often heard within myself a voice saying 'do that', and it came as an answer to my prayers and I knew the way I had to go." It was not uncommon to hear that a person had received the strength to carry on through another day, and there was a strong belief on the part of many that God has answered their prayers. "The only way I could overcome my fears was by prayer."

Some had a definite prayer outline which they adhered to regularly, and one man expressed it in this way:

"I pray for health, but also for a quiet, peaceful death when this comes. Above all I pray that I shall not be a burden on those who have looked after me for so long. Then I pray for family members, and remember them by name wherever they might be. And finally I pray for peace and the realisation of the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy Kingdom come on earth', for if only we prayed this as a Christian community it could make a change in troubled places."

While a woman, who had previously been a missionary in N. Africa, prayed daily for "an alert mind right to the end, and grace and strength to bear pain if it comes." One man even stated his

philosophy for life as, "Be sure to say your prayers faithfully each night and keep your bowels clear in the morning." But it was not suggested that there was a direct link between the two!

It is not altogether surprising that some found it difficult to pray. One woman who had worked as a doctor for many years found prayer more difficult as she grew older, and she advanced the reason that, "perhaps when I was working as a doctor it meant more to me because of my daily work." Another woman found it more difficult to pray now, because "it was hard to reconcile all she believed about a loving God with the terrible things that happen in the world today." Others prayed only when there was a special need in their lives or when something happened to upset them. But the main element in the prayers of those who prayed regularly was the offering of thanksgiving, and one expressed it "as not always asking but rather thanking God for all His goodness." Another, commenting that she prayed more now than previously, went on to say, "I couldn't live without my prayers. I have learnt to leave my troubles with the Lord." With the note of thanksgiving there was the plea that their faith might be made stronger throughout the difficulties of their latter years. One woman had a vision of her deceased husband near her as she prayed each night, and another prayed with a picture of Christ in her mind. It was only a minority who prayed morning and evening, but only one mentioned praying without reference to a fixed time or period of prayer.

Some of the non-members prayed daily and stated that this practice had continued from youth from parental example. One woman remembered her Mother's prayers as the great inspiration and example

throughout her life, and particularly the way she prayed for different members of the family when they were away from home. Another one had prayed every night since her husband's death and found the strength necessary to carry on alone. The majority only prayed when in some special need, for example, in hospital, or with a particular problem in mind. Only one man who remembered that he prayed in youth said that thereafter he had no use for prayer.

Regular, that is, daily, Bible-reading was not so common. But it is interesting to note that many regular Bible readers used Bible aids to help their understanding of the passages under consideration. While a few used modern versions of the Bible, for example, Good News for Modern Man, the great majority preferred the Authorised Version which they had used from youth. A number mentioned reading a chapter of the Bible each night and eventually made their way through the Bible from start to finish. Those who read the Bible occasionally had certain favourite passages which they had continued to read over the years. These included verses from St. John's Gospel, chs. 14 and 15, Revelation chs. 7 and 21, the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew ch.5), and 1 Corinthians, ch.13. Some remembered learning passages by heart, and actually recited them during the interview, for example, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and even parts of the Shorter Catechism. One woman recalled the time her Sunday School teacher taught her how to read the Bible and encouraged her to learn passages off by heart.

"I'm a moody person at times, but the Bible helps me through this and gives me great joy. Learning passages off by heart

means that they come back to you after a time just when you need it."

A few followed a regular practice of noting the scripture lessons used during worship at Church and then read them at leisure later that same day.

It was actually three men who spoke about their difficulty in believing parts of the Bible; and one woman had real difficulty in understanding parts of the New Testament, like the Parables of Jesus and the Letters of St. Paul, without some help from modern translations. Amongst the non-members there was one man who read aloud from the Bible to a friend in the evenings.

(c) Radio and Television religious programmes

Regular church-goers, whether past or present, only considered religious services on radio and television as a substitute for the real thing, and only one person actually said it was just like being in Church. The favourite programme without any doubt on both radio and television was Songs of Praise, and while a few mentioned Stars on Sunday (on Commercial Television) there were others who criticized this programme as being a form of religious entertainment. More listened to radio services than those on television, but this may be explained by the fact that the former are, or were, more frequent in the broadcasting programmes. A considerable number of church-goers, particularly the domiciled elderly, viewed religious television on Sunday evenings - being reluctant to go out in the evenings to the services in the Church, and a few enjoyed talks, interviews, and discussions, with the talks of Professor William

Barclay and Malcolm Muggeridge being specially mentioned. One lady had found that a programme on how the christian faith came into being registered particularly in her memory, but another could see no point in discussion programmes at all with the comment, "The trouble with them is that you hear too much unbelief....they would be better going on their knees in prayer."

For the non-members who were interested in religious broadcasting the same general comments applied. The majority of these enjoyed Songs of Praise, and a smaller number followed radio or television services. Only two expressed an interest in talks and, in both cases, they referred to the series undertaken by Professor William Barclay.

(d) Visitation of the elderly

Amongst church-goers very few descriptive comments were added to the answers regarding visits, although one woman made the point that regularity of visitation was the most important consideration.

"I am well visited by my friends - of which I have many, and Church visitors. As I get older I tend to be influenced by the regularity of the visits more than the actual number. You look for visits on particular days or at stated intervals. As friends are no longer with us, then there is a greater need for regular visitors from the Church."

It would appear that the majority were satisfied regarding visits, but this was not so much the case in connection with non-members who were interviewed. Here some lamented the fact that family and friends did not visit regularly, while others commented favourably on neighbour's visits. One elderly person had been particularly impressed by the visits of a young couple in the same tenement stair

at the time of the power cuts, and another spoke about the weekly visit of a previous employer. It was this person who added that "most people have to be invited to call, but I wish it was different." Only one said that he was not worried by having so few visitors, and some of the others accepted the situation with the explanation that most of their friends were dead anyway. The most cheerful comment came with the appreciative remarks of one lady who stated that her family made regular visits, and above all took her to their home twice a week. But this unfortunately was an exception.

In answer to the question whether the Church could help old people more, the majority felt that the Church did a great deal for elderly people - with the exception of the Wedderburn sample, and this is likely to refer to the increase in activities and amenities that have been introduced for their welfare in recent years. However the greatest cause of concern was found in the lack of ministerial visitation or the expression of an opinion that it was not carried out as frequently as in the past. One woman in commenting on the decrease of visitation carried out by ministers continued with the remarks:

"I think old people want them to talk about deeper things but they don't have time to do it when they do visit. My friend told me that her Minister used to say a prayer at the end of his visit, but now he doesn't bother."

Many in the Wedderburn sample felt neglected by the local Church, and some were sorry that young people did not visit them as part of the Church's outreach. Not all the criticism was directed against the ministers alone, for one elderly member, himself an

Elder, stated that:

"The Church as a whole does not show its practical religion to the extent it should, especially to old people. I don't think the Church - and I mean office bearers and members, visits them enough."

Quite a number expressed a wish to see more of young people, and a few of the domiciled elderly wondered if young people are really prepared to offer practical help in the home as a sphere of service for the community.

Most felt that the house-bound should receive the priority in visitation; but it should be added that one woman expressed the opinion:

"Some of the elderly expect too much from the Church, and are altogether too demanding in the matter of visitation and Church facilities."

She went on to remark:

"Some, who have grandchildren, may be inclined to welcome young people more, yet the majority prefer an older person should visit them just to be able to talk about old things."

From those who contributed an answer, a number of non-members believed that the Church for the most part served old people well according to their information and observation, and they also repeated the priority of visitation of the house-bound. It also should be mentioned that the fact that the Church had visited them, and in some cases given practical help, brought a response of gratitude for having been considered as a concern of the Church.

(e) Feelings of contentment or isolation

The majority of elderly Church members, including those in Homes or the domiciled elderly, expressed contentment with no feeling

of isolation as they grew older, and the response of thankfulness was repeated by many. This had a religious significance in statements like "the divine Hand has guided me throughout my life"; "I am always thankful for God's mercies"; or "my faith has been strengthened the longer I live." It was significant that the influence of family life from their earliest days had not been forgotten, and many expressed gratitude for a happy married life.

Contentment was also derived from a simple and less-demanding existence. Many of those interviewed commented on the change which had come over their lives when 'ambition and varied desires' no longer influenced them. One woman expressed it in the words:

"I don't worry about the things that once upset me. I wish sometimes that I wasn't growing older because I have a peace of mind now I never had when I was young."

While another felt strongly that "it all depends on how much you put into life if you are to get a satisfactory return." Naturally good health and sufficient economic resources were important factors which are rarely taken for granted by the elderly. Most had learned to accept the changes that life brings, and were generally content with less in terms of material wants.

It was interesting how many spoke about developing a more tolerant attitude to people in general, and they believed that they had become more tolerant and understanding as they grew older. It is of course true that other people, and especially those living with them, might have a different opinion about this, but for one woman this had meant a change in personal relationships. "I am more prepared now to go to a person and try to right a wrong or clear up a misunderstanding than ever I was before." One expressed

her basic philosophy as "being thankful for good health, tolerant of other people and trying to help others"; and many summed up their approach in the words of a familiar hymn, 'Count your blessings' and think of others less fortunate than yourselves. In fact listening to them speaking through many interviews one was impressed by this element of thankfulness, already mentioned, faith, and strong independence which seems to characterize this generation.

Among those who stated that they were less content, it was found that some had suffered an accident or experienced ill-health, which included some reference to depression. The problem of loneliness cropped up in a number of cases, although it was not necessary to be isolated simply to experience loneliness. "Loneliness is a dreadful thing. You may have good relations or friends but you can still be lonely and depressed." Many grew to fear the loneliness of being on their own at nights; and while one felt that "I need to get out and do things," it was still true that this time of the day was the very period they were likely to be kept indoors. Quite a number had suffered from the effects of bereavement and had never worked through their grief in a satisfactory manner. Women could speak of "missing their husband terribly," but it was men who seemed to be left helpless and inadequate in the home after the death of their spouse. There were others who lamented the passing of members of their generation and missed the companionship of their contemporaries, and a number of respondents mentioned the fact that being the last surviving member of their families had brought great distress and a feeling of loneliness. Some 'shut-ins' had adjusted

to their restricted way of life with remarkable success, but they missed the contacts with other people and the activities they had shared with them in the past. One bitterly complained of neglect, "It is all right if you can get to a pensioner's meeting, but it is no good if you are shut-in for then you are just forgotten." But it was by no means representative of the general opinion and experience of those interviewed. Only one described how she had more fear as she grew older, and another (also in an Abbeyfield Home) stated categorically that "Old Age doesn't bring contentment." But it was clear here that the fear had a great deal to do with the natural worry of what would happen to the respondents if they could not look after themselves. In this sense a great number of those interviewed were secretly worried on this score, and the fact came out in their replies to other questions later in the interview programme.

The majority of the domiciled elderly had a great pride in their state of independence, and while many found that their family was most helpful and considerate concerning their welfare it was obvious that just as many found their participation in church activities to be a major factor in maintaining their feeling of contentment. The majority in the Elms Eventide Home had been successful in making the necessary adjustment to a new way of life, and only two spoke of continuing difficulties in this respect. One man summed it up as a result of being removed from constant domestic difficulties experienced on his own, and this was shared by many other men. This situation was helped enormously by the fact that most residents were able to keep up their contacts with the outside world, and it was one important factor in successful adaptation to

the routine of community life. At Wedderburn it was noticeable that some women had accepted the life of the institution because they were afraid of the prospect of ever living outside it, and some actually spoke about their fear of leaving its protective atmosphere. One woman expressed her conviction that living there had 'saved her', and she was unable to visualise life in the ordinary community with any kind of confidence. However some of the men there had a nostalgia "for the old times when they had a greater freedom of life," and reflected on their former life with wife and family which, to them, was the only real and satisfactory existence.

Amongst the non-members, contentment was described in similar terms as above, such as, faith, family care, independence, fewer desires and good health. But more of them expressed their feeling of being less-contented owing to bad health, separation from relatives, and a general weariness resulting from loneliness. There were sharper comments here on feeling useless and being a burden to others, and one woman felt that "they (i.e., her family) will be relieved when my turn comes." The woman went so far as to say that "once you are past 70 years you should be taken away," but she was quite definitely an exception. Others brought up the question of loneliness and how this was more difficult to cope with at night, and for the shut-in there was this awful weariness of being kept indoors most of the time. Even here one had to admire the triumphant spirit of one elderly woman suffering from the effect of osteoarthritis who still remained content with her restricted

mobility around the house. in Tables of Results

- (a) "My mother used to say to me, 'Hard work never killed anyone, and it is worry that does it.' I am content if I can just get around!"

Another remembered the sad and difficult condition of others: "I saw so many folk in hospital so much worse than me, that I have been contented to remain on my own and do for myself." The majority would have agreed with one man that "there was not much point in being anything else," and it was a case of making the best of it, knowing that in the end it depended on the individual's ability to cope. The great majority of the residents at the Elms had regularly attended Church previously, namely 25 out of 30 - and this is not surprising as an application for admission includes a written testimonial from a Minister, and all indicated that they had attended Church during their youth. In the case of Wedderburn, similar high scores were recorded for previous attendance, that is 23 out of 27, and a further 25 had attended during youth.

The fact that 15 out of 30 at the Elms were able to attend outside services in Churches compared with 4 out of 27 in Wedderburn, is no simple indication of religious enthusiasm. For indeed factors of health and mobility, already mentioned, and transport arrangements by the Churches were vital in facilitating this attendance. 10 (3 males and 7 females) out of 15 were recorded as

As far as the respondents' families were concerned, 6 out of 7 of those in the Elms said that their children had a church connection; while at Wedderburn out of a possible 8 cases no evidence of such a connection was forthcoming. In fact some commented on

Analysis of the Answers with Tables of Results

(a) Church attendance with participation in church activities

Bearing in mind that many in both the Elms and Wedderburn were unable to attend Church or participate in organisational activities owing to health reasons, the great majority attended a short weekly service at the Elms (29 out of 30), while residents of Wedderburn had a lower score (15 out of 27). It is to be expected that most residents of a church Home would attend a service arranged in the Home, although no pressure would be applied to enforce it.

The great majority of the residents at the Elms had regularly attended Church previously, namely 26 out of 30 - and this is not surprising as an application for admission includes a written testimonial from a Minister, and all indicated that they had attended Church during their youth. In the case of Wedderburn, similar high scores were recorded for previous attendance, that is 23 out of 27, and a further 25 had attended during youth.

The fact that 15 out of 30 at the Elms were able to attend outside services in Churches compared with 4 out of 27 in Wedderburn, is no simple indication of religious enthusiasm. For indeed factors of health and mobility, already mentioned, and transport arrangements by the Churches were vital in facilitating this attendance.

As far as the respondents' families were concerned, 6 out of 7 of those in the Elms said that their children had a church connection; while at Wedderburn out of a possible 8 cases no evidence of such a connection was forthcoming. In fact some commented on

the lack of it in varying degrees of disappointment.

No members of either Home had an active participation in organisational activities, but certainly before admission a majority at the Elms, namely 19 out of 30 engaged in certain activities compared with 13 out of 27 at Wedderburn. (see Tables 1 and 2).

In the total for Institutions (i.e. Homes for the elderly) we have included the Abbeyfield scores: and also in Tables 3 and 4, the domiciled elderly include all those interviewed in the parish area regardless of membership. 27 of the domiciled elderly (6 males and 21 females) were unable to attend Church owing to infirmity, and the number of non-members interviewed was 31. This left 16 males and 44 females recorded as being church attenders at present. In Table 3 we have additional information of high scores for previous attendance with even higher figures for attachment during youth. It should be added that of the non-members interviewed as many as 13 (1 male and 12 females) previously attended Church, in many cases up to their middle years, and later lapsed from membership of the Church.

As far as respondents families were concerned 44 (17 males and 27 females) out of 69, said that their children had a church connection. It is interesting to note that of the non-members in this respect 10 (3 males and 7 females) out of 18 are included in the above figure.

It is not surprising that the majority of the women in the sample of domiciled elderly had either a present or previous (or both) connection with church activities. Table 4 gives detailed analysis of the activities, and many elderly women have kept up

Those recording no church activities: ELMS (11): WEDDERBURN (14).

TABLE 1. Past and present church attendance of elderly residents in 2 institutions

Church attendance	ELMS (30)		WEDDERBURN (27)	
	Male (10)	Female (20)	Male (6)	Female (21)
Present - in Church	3	12	2	2
in Institution	10	19	2	13
Previously	8	18	4	19
Youth	10	20	5	20

ELMS (30) and WEDDERBURN (27) indicates the total number interviewed in the 2 institutions.

The abbreviations M () and F () indicates male and female respondents in later tables with relevant numbers.

Also in these tables, 'previously' refers to the period prior to admission.

TABLE 2. Participation in church activities by elderly residents in 2 institutions

Church activities	ELMS		WEDDERBURN	
	M (3)	F (16)	M (2)	F (11)
Office bearer	1		1	
Sunday School Teacher	1	4		1
Woman's Guild		7		7
Sisterhood		2	1	
Prayer Group		1	1	
Lady Visitor		1		
Choir	1	7	1	5

Those recording no church activities: ELMS (11): WEDDERBURN (14).

TABLE 3. Past and present church attendance of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

Church attendance	INSTIT. (HOMES)		DOMICILED ELDERLY	
	M (17)	F (49)	M (31)	F(87)
Present - in Church	6	16	16	44
- in Instit.	13	40		
Previously	13	44	21	76
Youth	16	48	29	85

Those resident in an Abbeyfield normally have a short weekly service. 17 at Wedderburn. This included 50% of the males in the Elms and 50% of the males at Wedderburn (Table 5).

The percentage scores for Instit. (Homes) were 50% of the males

TABLE 4. Participation in church activities by elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

Church activities	INSTIT. (HOMES)		DOMICILED ELDERLY	
	M (6)	F (34)	M (16)	F (65)
Office bearer	3		10	
Sunday school Teacher	1	5		10
Woman's Guild		20		50
Sisterhood		2		30
Prayer Group	1	2		1
Lady Visitor		2		12
Choir	2	12	1	9
Men's Club			4	

Those recording no church activities: INSTIT. (26);
DOM. ELDERLY (37).

their attendance at the Woman's Guild and Sisterhood. More were present attenders of a Sisterhood type of meeting as their attendance is normally made at an afternoon session. The nature or form of the meeting allied to the fact that its membership is entirely elderly makes it a most popular organisation for elderly women. All 6 women, who are non-members, attending church activities, actually made their attendance at Sisterhood meetings.

(b) Prayer and Bible reading

The prayer habit, which had been maintained throughout life, showed up in high scores registered as a daily event; namely, 25 in the Elms and 17 at Wedderburn. This included 60% of the males in the Elms and 50% of the males at Wedderburn (Table 5).

The percentage scores for Instit. (Homes) were 60% of the males and 80% of the females contrasted with 61% of the men and 77% of the females who were living in their own homes. These results show little difference between the 2 groups (Table 6). Among non-members (included in the figures for the domiciled elderly) 18 out of 31 came in the 'occasional' category for prayer, and the majority of the male answers were divided equally between 'occasional' and 'never' categories.

In Bible-reading as a devotional exercise a different picture emerges. At the Elms 14 read daily, but this only included 1 male respondent; while only 5 at Wedderburn follow this practice daily. 14 at Wedderburn never read the Bible at all, and the majority of men in both cases come into the 'occasional' or 'never' categories (Table 7). This is repeated when we make a comparison between

TABLE 5. Frequency of prayer in the devotional life of elderly residents in 2 Institutions

Prayers	ELMS		WEDDERBURN	
	M (10)	F (20)	M (6)	F (21)
Pray daily	6	19	3	14
occas.	3	1	2	6
never	1		1	1

TABLE 6. Frequency of prayer in the devotional life of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

Prayers	INSTIT. (HOMES)		DOM. ELDERLY	
	M (17)	F (49)	M (31)	F (87)
Pray daily	10	39	19	67
occas.	5	9	8	19
never	2	1	4	1

(d) 'occasional' represents monthly or less

We would expect a minority of those in Instit. (Homes) to receive regular visits from family or relations (Table 11), for this is one reason why many are in the Homes. Also a great number of single women are actually resident in these places. The figures for

those in Instit. (Homes) and the domiciled elderly (Table 8). But the percentage of the former reading daily, 32%, is higher than the latter, 19%; although the high score of the domiciled elderly who never read the Bible, almost 50%, includes 28 of the non-members who fall into this category.

(c) Interest shown in Radio and Television religious programmes

As far as religious Radio and Television are concerned, some account must be taken of deficiencies in hearing and sight which prevented a small number from taking advantage of these facilities. In Table 9 we see that there is a majority of the Elms residents who listen and view religious programmes in the proportion of 2:1. In Wedderburn this is true of the men, but the women are equally divided between those who listen and view and those who don't.

In the case of the domiciled elderly who are members of the Church, a majority of men in the proportion of 2:1 do not listen to religious radio programmes, but do view religious television in the higher proportion of 3:1. Slightly more women listen to religious radio than view television, but a clear majority do both (Table 10). For the smaller sample of non-members the results are different. More, of both sexes, do not listen to or view religious programmes, and the proportion is of the order of 2:1.

(d) Visitation of the elderly, including church visitation

We would expect a minority of those in Instit. (Homes) to receive regular visits from family or relations (Table 11), for this is one reason why many are in the Homes. Also a great number of single women are actually resident in these places. The figures for

TABLE 7. Frequency of Bible reading in the devotional life of elderly residents in 2 Institutions

Bible reading	ELMS		WEDDERBURN	
	M (10)	F (20)	M (6)	F (21)
Read daily	1	13	1	4
occas.	4	4	2	6
never	5	3	3	11

TABLE 8. Frequency of Bible reading in the devotional life of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

Bible reading	INSTIT. (HOMES)		DOM. ELDERLY	
	M (17)	F (49)	M (31)	F (87)
Read daily	2	19	3	19
occas.	7	15	12	26
never	8	15	16	42

'occasional' represents monthly or less.

TABLE 9. Interest shown in religious Radio and Television programmes by elderly residents in 2 Institutions

Radio & T.V.	ELMS		WEDDERBURN	
	M (10)	F (20)	M (6)	F (21)
Those who listen	6	14	4	10
" " don't	4	6	2	11
Those who view	7	13	4	11
" " don't	3	7	2	10

TABLE 10. Interest shown in religious Radio and Television programmes by elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

Radio & T.V.	INSTIT. (HOMES)		DOM. ELDERLY			
	M (17)	F (49)	MEMBERS M(22)	F(65)	NON-MEMBERS M(9)	F(22)
Those who listen	10	29	7	41	3	6
" " don't	7	20	15	24	6	16
Those who view	12	29	17	36	4	7
" " don't	5	20	5	29	5	15

The figures for church visitation are high with 89% receiving regular and occasional visits from minister, office bearers or members. It should be noted (in Table 12) that 'occasional' visits are in the majority (43 compared with 29), and this will include the

Elms and Wedderburn are similar in this respect, where approximately a third have regular or occasional visits from family or relations. More friends visit residents of the Elms (8) compared with Wedderburn (2), but the small number of young people (members of the family) who visit is almost the same for both. Regular and occasional visits by members of the Church (including ministers, office bearers and members) is higher in the case of the Elms. It should be added that many visitors from different Churches and Youth groups are a feature of life at the Elms, but this is not the case at Wedderburn.

For the domiciled elderly, the figures show a higher number of respondents who actually received family visits. In the case of those who are members of Churches, 66% received regular visits, including a smaller number of occasional visitors (a total of 57) — see Table 12. In addition, 38 indicated that they received visits from young people, including 7 in the category of occasional visitors. A smaller number of friends visited regularly (16) and a further 2 occasionally. It seems surprising that only 2 made special mention of neighbour's visits, and the explanation after enquiry was that their visits, in so many cases, were daily and taken for granted in the daily routine of life. It is also true that they may be included in the category of visitation made by church members.

The figures for church visitation are high with 89% receiving regular and occasional visits from minister, office bearers or members. It should be noted (in Table 12) that 'occasional' visits are in the majority (48 compared with 29), and this will include the

TABLE 11. The nature and the frequency of the Visitation of elderly residents in 2 Institutions

Visitors		ELMS		WEDDERBURN	
		M (10)	F (20)	M (6)	F (21)
FAMILY	reg.	3	6	1	8
	occas.		2		1
FRIENDS	reg.		8	1	1
	occas.				
NEIGHBOURS	reg.		1		
	occas.				
YOUNG PEOPLE	reg.		5	1	3
	occas.				
CHURCH	reg.	2	7	2	7
	occas.	2	6		

Where 'regular' visit indicates weekly or less

'occasional' visit indicates monthly or less.

It will be noted that the above categories are not mutually exclusive.

TABLE 12. The nature and the frequency of the Visitation of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields)
(a) An estimate compared with those privately domiciled

Visitors		INSTIT.(HOMES)		DOM. ELDERLY			
		M (17)	F (49)	MEMBERS		NON-MEMBERS	
				M(22)	F(65)	M(9)	F(22)
FAMILY	reg.	4	17	11	34	5	12
	occas.		6	3	9	1	2
FRIENDS	reg.	2	10	3	13	2	5
	occas.		1	1	1		
NEIGHBOURS	reg.		1		2	1	3
	occas.						
YOUNG PEOPLE	reg.	1	9	9	22	3	9
	occas.		1		7		2
CHURCH	reg.	4	16	7	22		
	occas.	3	10	12	36	3	6

It will be noted that the above categories are not mutually exclusive

monthly visit of a Lady Visitor (where congregations distribute their magazine monthly) and the quarterly visit of an Elder. The regular visit often indicates a special visitation for those who are shut-in or suffering from some form of disability which is covered by a Stewardship programme organised to meet this kind of need.

The non-members sample shows that two-thirds are visited regularly or occasionally by family or relations, and this closely resembles the results from the large sample of church members. The number receiving visits from young people differs only very slightly (45% compared to 44%), and this is repeated in visits from friends (22% compared to 21%). There are 9 occasional visitors from the Church, which includes 6 women members of the Sisterhood organisation (London Road Church). This organisation has a very good record of visitation of its members and it is carried out by committee members. The 3 men are visited as a result of ministerial contacts, and come in the category of special need.

(e) An estimate of the feelings of contentment or isolation according to a 3-point scale

In the Elms we have high scores for 'more contentment' or the 'same' allied to no feeling of isolation (feeling cut-off from society). From Table 13 we find the percentage scores are 77% - 80%. The corresponding figures for Wedderburn are high in respect of contentment ('more contented' or 'the same') with 80%. But as the interpretation will show this figure includes the effect of institutionalization upon many of the residents. However, for isolation, we find the majority record some degree of isolation; either a

TABLE 13. The number of elderly residents experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in 2 Institutions

	ELMS Instit.		WEDDERBURN	
	M(10)	F(20)	M(6)	F(21)
<u>Contentment</u>				
More contented as they grow older	4	8	1	12
the same	4	7	2	7
less contented	2	5	3	2
<u>Isolation</u>				
definitely felt isolated	3	3	2	9
sometimes			2	2
never	7	17	2	10

TABLE 14. The number of elderly residents experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

	INSTIT. (HOMES)		DOM. ELDERLY			
	M (17)	F (49)	MEMBERS M(22)	F(65)	NON-MEMBERS M(9)	F(22)
<u>Contentment</u>						
more contented	5	21	5	25		2
the same	7	17	12	27	5	12
less contented	5	11	5	13	4	8
<u>Isolation</u>						
definitely isolated	5	12	1	3	1	
sometimes	2	4	4	9	4	9
never	10	33	17	53	4	13

definite feeling of being cut-off from society or an occasional experience in the proportion of 5:4.

When we take the total figures for Instit. (Homes), we find 76% are contented (i.e. 'more contented' or 'the same') with 65% who have no feeling of being isolated or cut-off. Compared with the domiciled elderly who are church members this result is even more pronounced, namely 80% in both cases (see Table 14).

As we would expect single people to be more able to adjust to the situation of advancing years compared with the widowed, the following Tables 15 and 16 were constructed to test this hypothesis. In Table 16, of those in Instit.(Homes), 82% of the single consider themselves 'more contented' or 'the same' compared to 69% of the widowed; and in the scores for those who do not feel isolated the difference is greater, namely 76% compared with 53%. In the Instit.(Homes), the total number of single persons and widowed who are compared is almost the same, namely, 34 to 32. But in the case of the domiciled elderly, who are members of Churches, the difference is expressed to the extent of 23 single persons compared to 54 widowed. Here those who are 'more contented' and the 'same' amongst the single persons reaches the higher percentage of 91%, compared with 76% of the widowed. It is obvious that a vital factor in this connection will be the length of time the widowed had been bereaved and consequently their opportunity to adjust would vary accordingly. Other factors, to be considered later in the interpretation, such as illness or disability have a great effect on attitudes towards contentment. On the question of isolation, the figures for both groups show high scores for the attitude which expresses no real

TABLE 15. The number of single and widowed elderly experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in 2 Institutions

Contentment	ELMS				WEDDERBURN			
	SINGLE		WIDOWED		SINGLE		WIDOWED	
	M(1)	F(16)	M(9)	F(4)	M(2)	F(11)	M(4)	F(10)
more contented			4			9	1	3
same	1	8	3	1		1	2	6
less		6	2	3	2	1	1	1
Isolation		2						
definitely isolated		2	3	1	2	4		5
sometimes							2	2
never	1	14	6	3		7	2	3

TABLE 16. The number of single and widowed elderly experiencing different feelings of contentment or isolation in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

Contentment	INSTIT. (HOMES)				MEMBERS				DOM. ELDERLY			
	SINGLE		WIDOWED		SINGLE		WIDOWED		SINGLE		WIDOWED	
	M(3)	F(31)	M(14)	F(18)	M(-)	F(23)	M(16)	F(38)	M(-)	F(3)	M(5)	F(15)
more contented		18	5	3		7	5	18				
same	1	9	6	8		14	7	11		2	2	10
less	2	4	3	7		2	4	9		1	3	5
Isolation												
definitely isolated	2	6	3	6		2		1			1	
sometimes			2	4		3	3	4		1	2	7
never	1	25	9	8		18	13	33		2	2	8

feeling of being cut-off from society, namely 78% for the single compared with 85% of the widowed.

Regarding the non-members of the domiciled elderly the total numbers for the single are only 3 compared with 20 widowed. In Table 16, we see that the majority are included in the category of the 'same' in terms of contentment, and here - as far as the widowed are concerned - the proportion is 3:2 compared with those less contented. The number of widowed who feel isolated, whether definitely or occasionally, is the same as those who have no experience of being cut-off from society. The figures for the single are too small to be significant for purposes of comparison.

(f) Attitudes of the elderly towards the helping ministry of the Church

Finally in this section, in answer to the question whether the Church could help old people more than it does at present, it is significant that 22 in Homes answered affirmatively, while 31 were content with its record of service (13 gave no clear answer). However for the domiciled elderly, who are church members, only 14 replied affirmatively and 73 remained content. As far as Homes are concerned, 13 out of the 22 who answered affirmatively were in fact Wedderburn residents. The majority of the non-members declined to make any definite answer.

The church eventide Home had a better record of attendance at the weekly services in the Home compared with Wedderburn. The latter depended on arrangements made with a local Church which did not prove satisfactory, while at the Elms the superintendent was responsible for the organisation of services and the invitation to

Interpretation of the Data According to the sub-hypotheses

The interpretation in Chapters 5-7 is related to the sub-hypotheses, and the main hypotheses of the thesis are considered in Chapter 8 under the title of Conclusions, with special reference to the results of research entered in Chapter 2.

(a) That the elderly, if physically able, go to Church (in respect of worship attendance and church activities) more regularly than when young or in later years

Following an examination of the interview material and the analysis of the results, it is clear that the pattern of church attendance was formed in youth and generally maintained throughout life. Apart from those who are listed as infirm, church attendance at the Homes refers to weekly services in the Homes and the attendance of certain members at Churches of their own membership. For the domiciled elderly, attendance at Church as entered in the Tables represents attendances of at least once a month (but generally more). More women than men had previous or present association with church activities, and the majority had maintained this association up to the time of the interviews, particularly in Woman's Guilds and Sisterhoods. Sisterhood meetings had a higher rate of attendance and membership because they were held in the afternoon.

The church eventide Home had a better record of attendance at the weekly services in the Home compared with Wedderburn. The latter depended on arrangements made with a local Church which did not prove satisfactory, while at the Elms the superintendent was responsible for the organisation of services and the invitation to

different ministers to conduct them. More residents at the Elms had a connection with a congregation and also attended services there compared with the residents at Wedderburn. As has already been mentioned the residents at the Elms had a church membership qualification for entry to the Home, but it is significant that only 4 in the Wedderburn sample had no church membership prior to entry. All the Abbeyfield sample were church members and were able to maintain church attendance on the basis of at least one attendance per month.

For the domiciled elderly we have recorded high figures for attendance, on the basis of at least once a month, previously as well as in youth. It may not be surprising that the sample, including non-members, showed the highest scores for attendance during youth. Yet the most significant fact emerging from the non-members' answers pointed to the considerable minority (actually 13 out of 31) who were lapsed members of the Church. It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that this fact would crop up in similar surveys if they were carried out in corresponding districts of this part of Scotland.

When we examine the figures for participation in church activities, we notice that men have a close association with the Church only as office-bearers with very few other activities. A very small number recorded membership of a Men's Fellowship, and this may seem surprising when their activities are very often recreational or sporting. However women have far greater interest in church organisations as shown by their membership, in the past as well as the present, of Guilds and Sisterhoods. In fact 6 women in the

non-members group attended Sisterhood meetings regularly, but it should be noted that the meetings are open to all women without insisting on some Church qualification for entry and membership.

When we consider family attendance, almost all at the Elms who had families recorded a church connection for the majority of their children. But this was not the case at Wedderburn. One explanation is that the residents at the Elms had a stronger attachment to the Church which influenced their children's attitudes and practice, or it may be that social classification, with a stronger representation of middle-class background in the Elms sample, was the relevant factor. A majority of the children of the domiciled elderly members had a church connection, but it was also true of a majority of the children of non-members (actually 10 out of 18). This latter result could be explained by the number of lapsed members found in the non-member sample.

(b) That the majority of the elderly maintain a devotional life with Prayer and Bible-reading

Following an examination of the interview material and the analysis of the results, a definite majority of both males and females in the Homes and among the domiciled elderly members prayed daily, with an even higher percentage of females making this regular devotion. Prayer among the non-members group was not practised so often, but even here over one half prayed 'occasionally' (monthly or less). In the case of Bible-reading the position is reversed for only a minority read their Bibles daily. In the higher percentage recorded for those in Homes (32%) we find an actual majority included - namely

the female residents of the Elms. They alone made this a daily devotional exercise. Almost all the non-members never read the Bible. From the results we find that the large majority of the elderly who practised daily prayer had learned this habit from youth, and continued it throughout their lives as a way of seeking guidance in their daily lives and coping with problems. While this was not true of non-members, it was still significant, in their case, that they did have recourse to prayer during their lives when they presumably prayed for special reasons. It may not have been a daily exercise, but the habit of prayer, formed in youth, had not been forgotten or neglected.

Very few read the Bible as a devotional aid or exercise, and from the interviews one gathers that their knowledge of the Bible goes back to earlier years when special passages had been learnt by heart, and in one or two cases were recited for the benefit of the interviewer. But some had a special reason for remembering such passages of scripture as they had been a source of strength or comfort during trying circumstances of life. Among the female residents at the Elms where many had a regular practice of Bible-reading, a number made special mention of the help they received from bible-reading aids. Their comments underlined the difficulty most people have in reading the Bible regularly without some systematic guidance or help, and if this generation, according to the sample, has little experience of regular bible-reading it will not be surprising if younger generations have even less.

if it is religious, and hymn-singing of the Songs of Praise variety

(c) That the elderly have a special interest in Radio and Television religious programmes

Following an examination of the interview material and the analysis of the results, the majority of the elderly do listen to and view Radio and Television religious programmes. The exception is found in the case of male domiciled elderly as far as radio is concerned, but men show higher scores for religious television viewing in both the Homes and among the Domiciled Elderly. As far as women are concerned the majority is less in the case of religious television viewing among the domiciled elderly, while the majority is the same in the Homes. Non-members show similar scores for radio and television, but a definite majority do not listen to or view religious broadcasting.

It is often assumed that men generally, and in particular the elderly, watch television more than women, and if this is true then it is quite likely that religious television will be included in their total viewing, especially on Sunday evenings. It does not follow that they would have switched on, or changed to, a religious programme, but rather they would continue to view an evening's programme regardless of the change to religious items. If men have a preference for religious television programmes, then the scores for the women indicate a preference for radio, particularly in the case of the domiciled elderly members. It is probable that their domestic duties and visitation from family or friends make their contact with television more limited. Certainly it is much easier for them to engage in domestic chores with a radio background - even if it is religious, and hymn-singing of the Songs of Praise variety

is a case in point. church organisations who visit periodically.

Most regular church-goers considered religious programmes only as a substitute for the real thing, but far fewer elderly people go to Church in the evening on Sunday when the major part of religious broadcasting takes place. It is quite clear that the majority of the elderly in the sample have an interest in religious programmes, but without doubt the favourite programme on radio or television is Songs of Praise. Not many mentioned an interest in discussion programmes, but talks by Prof. William Barclay had a large following in the elderly group. Although a majority of non-members do not listen to or view religious items, it was found that of the remainder slightly more men viewed religious television. (The figures were as follows: 22 out of 31 for radio, and 20 out of 31 for television. Also 4 out of 9 men viewed religious T.V.).

new housing estates. A considerable number received visits from

(d) That the elderly have regular visits from family, friends, young people, and the Church

Following an examination of the interview material and the analysis of the results, it was found that a majority of the domiciled elderly, both members and non-members (52% and 54% respectively), received regular visits from family or relatives (see Table 12). This was not true for the elderly in the Homes. In connection with church visitation the results show a high percentage of the domiciled elderly members receiving both regular and occasional visits, with the non-members not completely neglected in this respect. A minority in the Homes received regular visitation from the Church, but it should be added that the Elms has regular

contact with various church organisations who visit periodically. This was not the case at Wedderburn.

It has been mentioned in the analysis that we would expect less family visitation at the Homes because there are a great many single elderly women accommodated there. It does not follow that because widowed elderly are living in Homes then their families are more likely to neglect them. But it may be that the reasons why they are there include some reference to the difficulties families have in caring for them. In the case of those living in their own homes, two-thirds received regular family visits. This seems to indicate that the elderly are hardly neglected by their families as many imagine, and this result confirms other findings. It is all the more impressive when we consider the greater social mobility of the age and the separation of the generations in the development of new housing estates. A considerable number received visits from children, and there is no doubt that grand-children or great grand-children bring great joy to the elderly. In this connection it is interesting to note that people in the Homes very much enjoyed contact with young people, and while the Elms was favoured in this respect, many in Wedderburn commented on how much they missed them.

Non-members enjoyed the same family contacts by visitation, but in the interviews more expressed their feelings openly when it was clear that visits did not take place.

(e) That the elderly feel more contented and less isolated as they grow old The analysis has made clear that visitation by the Church includes a variety of visitors from Minister, Office-bearers to Lady visitors. While the record of Churches varies considerably it means

that regular and occasional visits can make up an impressive total if the Stewardship programme is well organised. Many church members act as 'good neighbours' to the elderly living near them, and it was mentioned in the analysis that a reason for the small number of recorded visits from neighbours was the fact that these happen so regularly, often daily, as to be taken for granted. When the neighbour is continually 'dropping in' to enquire for the needs of the day, it does not appear as a special visit in the minds of the elderly concerned. Non-members who had visits from the Church included women with organisational links already described, and also a number of men who received visits connected with a particular need which was discovered in a Parish Visitation.

Some church members expressed concern regarding the decrease in the frequency of ministerial visits. Ministers have been critical of the purely 'social call' type of visit, but from the interviews it appeared that while most of the elderly enjoyed the social chat and cup of tea, quite a number were looking for something more which involved the opportunity of talking seriously about spiritual matters of deep concern. They were clear that priorities in visitation should be made to the house-bound and the sick, but they emphasised that they had real spiritual needs and required their minister on occasions just as much as their doctor.

(e) That the elderly feel more contented and less isolated as they grow older

Following an examination of the interview material and the analysis of the results, the majority of the elderly in the Homes feel

'more contented' or 'the same' and not isolated. Just under a half registered feelings of 'more contentment'. The exception to this in feelings of isolation - which is masked by the total percentage, is found in the Wedderburn sample where there is an equal number of those feeling isolation compared with the opposite. A much higher percentage is recorded for the domiciled elderly members, but again figures for 'more contented' produce less than a half of the total.

The single elderly show higher scores for 'more contented' or 'the same' compared with the widowed elderly in the Homes and among the domiciled elderly, and the percentage difference is much the same in both cases. Regarding isolation, both groups show high scores for the feeling of not being isolated, and the slightly higher figure for the widowed does not appear significant.

Non-members showed a higher proportion of those experiencing 'the same' feeling of contentment or 'less-contented' with isolation sometimes. As only three of the sample were single female elderly this was considered too small a number to use for comparison purposes with the widowed.

In the Elms the high scores for contentment with no feeling of isolation reflect the open nature of the communal life there. Most residents are able to go out for walks or visit friends and receive visitors. This is most certainly true for the people living in the Abbeyfields. For Wedderburn high scores for contentment have to be interpreted in the light of the process of institutionalization, where many, with little contact with the outside world, have become totally dependent on the Institution and its services. Those not

affected in this way may also express a feeling of isolation because of lack of contact with the outside world and its remote situation.

While the majority of non-members experienced some feeling of contentment without isolation, it was not expressed to the same extent as the domiciled elderly members. Those who did not feel contented expressed themselves more openly and were sharper in their comments than any other group. They may not have been under any restraint to express their true feelings, but, on the other hand, the elderly members living in their own homes often spoke about the influence of faith which was an important factor in their contentment.

It was clear from the answers that many who felt isolated experienced varying degrees of loneliness. The fact of being on their own at night caused many to have some hardship or distress, and this was true in cases where regular visitors appeared during the day. But the loneliness associated with bereavement was a more serious problem that never entirely disappeared in many cases. Also the feeling of being cut-off from contemporaries by outliving them did produce in some cases a mild depression as they continued to grow old on their own.

It was found that the single were more contented as they became elderly compared to the widowed in all samples. Yet the length of time the widowed had been bereaved is an important factor in evaluating this difference. In most cases some considerable time had elapsed since the original crisis situation, and one would expect that enough time had passed to make adjustment possible. In fact it was research policy not to interview anyone who had only recently suffered bereavement. It might have been thought that the single why the situation should be different in the homes, although the

elderly would be less contented if they had not the care and comfort of family attention to draw upon, but this did not show up in the results to any marked degree. It was obvious that bad health, disability, and depression were factors strongly determining the degree of contentment, and people in this category had a greater worry as to whether they would become burdens upon their families. There is no doubt from the evidence that they expressed their feelings openly on this score, and from the answers it appears to be never far from their minds.

Summary

Following an examination of the interview material and the analysis of the results, the interpretation of the data was presented in relation to the sub-hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the study. This made it possible to reserve for the last chapter consideration of the main hypotheses and to determine whether they are supported or not by the evidence. It was shown that church attendance and activities had been maintained throughout the major part of the respondent's lives; and personal devotions, particularly prayer - but not bible-reading - had always been a marked feature of their lives. Although a majority of the elderly sample showed an interest in religious broadcasting, it was seen that male respondents had a greater interest in television programmes. A majority of the domiciled elderly had regular visits from family and friends and in this sense were not neglected. They also received both regular and occasional visits from the Church with a high percentage being recorded in these results. There were good reasons why the situation should be different in the Homes, although the

eventide home had a favourable relationship with many Churches and organisations. Finally, according to the 3-point scale employed, the majority of the elderly in the Homes expressed feelings of 'more contented' or 'the same' and not isolated, but a much higher percentage was recorded for the domiciled elderly.

We now proceed in the next chapter to consider the adaptability of the elderly sample to crisis situations. In the main these situations arise through the experience of bereavement, and also the crisis of retirement is included in this section.

The great majority of the crisis situations described in the interviews concerned the experience of bereavement. Amongst those who made a successful adjustment to the crisis situation in the Homes, about a half made some reference to faith or Church life as a reason for this adjustment. In most cases it was a combination of personal faith and involvement in Church life, but in 2 cases at the Elms it was expressed in terms of "a reassurance of the presence of the deceased" beside them through their difficult situation. One man could look back to the reassurance he gained at the time of the funeral service which had led to the development of a stronger faith which had sustained him ever since. One woman at the Abbeyfield Home gave a full statement of evangelical faith which she stated clearly and persuasively as the reason for accepting her husband's death as God's will. She ended her answer with the words:

"You know what this loss means after a lifetime together. I miss my husband very much. But I have come to accept it, and I am glad he is with the Lord and is safe. I believe it is the Lord's will for me."

CHAPTER 6

ADAPTATION TO CRISIS SITUATIONS IN THE ELDERLY SAMPLE

In this chapter we present the interview material of the second section of the questionnaire (referred to as Section B), and the same order is followed as in Chapter 5.

Description of the Interview Material

(a) Crisis situation

(i) Bereavement

The great majority of the crisis situations described in the interviews concerned the experience of bereavement. Amongst those who made a successful adjustment to the crisis situation in the Homes, about a half made some reference to faith or Church life as a reason for this adjustment. In most cases it was a combination of personal faith and involvement in Church life, but in 2 cases at the Elms it was expressed in terms of "a reassurance of the presence of the deceased" beside them through their difficult situation. One man could look back to the reassurance he gained at the time of the funeral service which had led to the development of a stronger faith which had sustained him ever since. One woman at the Abbeyfield Home gave a full statement of evangelical faith which she stated clearly and persuasively as the reason for accepting her husband's death as God's will. She ended her answer with the words:

"You know what this loss means after a lifetime together. I miss my husband very much. But I have come to accept it, and I am glad he is with the Lord and is safe. I believe it is the Lord's will for me."

Also a number of women at the Elms described the way they had increased their participation in church work and activities as a necessary part of the adjustment process. There is no doubt that it was extremely important for them in their situation.

Those who found adjustment difficult included men and women whose faith was threatened by the experience of bereavement, and this came out strongly in the case of certain men who suffered a complete breakdown in social and domestic relationships. Their normal way of life was disrupted for varying periods, and they described their lives at the time as completely shattered. This was true in three cases at Wedderburn. Amongst women there suffering great distress, there were cases of serious family trouble resulting from the crisis described. It seemed that the respondents were accused of negligence in the care of the deceased prior to death, or in one case the death of the mother removed the reconciling force in family affairs which meant that family squabbles erupted almost immediately after she died. It was also recorded that distress was registered and continued for a considerable time afterwards owing to the deceased's change of mental condition prior to death, and there was a rather sad story of distress caused by a neighbour who accused the respondent of negligence in the care of her mother before her death. It should also be added that in certain cases distress was experienced because the respondent was not present at the time of the husband's death, and this unfortunately produced a kind of guilt complex which was unreasonable in the light of their history but still persisted in the life of the individual. For those who found it difficult to work through their

grief, the following statement is typical of their distress as it manifested itself for many years.

"I remember now that for the first year after my husband's death I was absolutely miserable. He was ill for a year with cancer and he had a great deal of pain. I did most of the nursing at home, and I must have been very tired with it all...I took a long time to get over his death for I remembered how he died. I wonder if I have ever really got over it for I have never been the same since his death. I don't have the awful feeling of loss now, but now and again it all comes over me and that hasn't changed."

A number of single women described the strain associated with the nursing of elderly parents or relatives before their death, and in some cases it led to a nervous breakdown which made adjustment more difficult and prolonged the period of adjustment itself.

For the domiciled elderly there was a higher proportion of successful adjustment, and just over a half indicated the essential part faith or Church life played in this process. Again faith was expressed in terms of a strong belief in God's comforting and loving presence, and one woman said that she didn't reproach God for her loss but kept her faith intact. In one case the actual crisis situation was built round a very serious illness she had passed through, and it proved to be the first time she had reflected deeply on her faith.

"I was really seriously ill when I went in to hospital (where she stayed for 9 months) and I was depressed because I suppose I thought I was going to die. I was older than most of the other patients in the ward and perhaps that made me think more deeply about things. Certainly it was the first time I reflected deeply on my faith."

She described how she received regular visits from members of her family and the Minister:

"The other patients in the ward, even the youngest, were the greatest support. For I remember when someone went to the theatre the ward was silent that day, and you felt that prayer was very real. I know it was real for me, and that helped me through."

The result was a stronger faith which enabled her to surmount the crisis of incapacity as an invalid for some years afterward. A great number found comfort and consolation in their work in the Church, and one found that her faith came back gradually as she made herself useful in the Church and the community. But in many cases successful adjustment was helped by the immediate necessity to care for a family, and in one particular instance the care of a retarded daughter. In this latter case the woman concerned was very bitter at the time of her husband's death. She remembered that the greatest difficulty she had was meeting other people, and it was her minister, in particular, who encouraged her to go out and meet people and gave her the advice, "You will find you are not alone in misfortune." But she overcame her bitterness in the care and attention which was necessary in the upbringing of her retarded daughter. "I came to realise that she was sent for a purpose" she remarked; and her adjustment was further consolidated by the understanding that other people would suffer bereavement and, because she had experienced it, the way was open for her to help others. The feeling of relief that adjustment had been made was very strong in her case, for, as she explained, "When I talk to some married women I know the prospect of bereavement is an ever-present anxiety for them." Others found that adjustment was promoted by taking on a job of work, and this helped considerably when the employment brought them into contact with other people, particularly in shops. Some also mentioned helping others who had

suffered bereavement or some other kind of trouble, and one found a new interest in visiting people in hospital. Many believed that they had been helped by resuming former associations in the Church and local community quite soon after bereavement, but in most cases the major support was provided by the family and their children. It was not only the visits that were made by members of the family that counted as an important factor in the adjustment to a new form of life, but also the opportunity to make frequent visits was just as important for many who were interviewed. One widow said she had difficulty in adjusting to the situation following her husband's death:

"You get over it - you have to get over it, but never completely. I don't believe time is the great healer.... But I found that I had a lot of help when I went to see my grandchildren. I always seemed to feel depressed before I went, but afterwards I felt much better. You see they helped me a lot."

While it was stated previously that some men found it almost impossible to carry on by themselves, it is true that some others who were interviewed found it easier to adjust to life on their own because the care of a sick wife during her terminal illness had made them familiar with the daily routine of domestic chores and duties.

A large minority experienced a difficult adjustment and for them time was not necessarily the great healer. Bitterness was expressed as to why their loved one should have been taken away or why they should have suffered after all their good works during their lifetime. A crisis of faith was often reported, but in most cases they managed to come through the long period of bereavement with some measure of adjustment. In this connection a number spoke of their difficulties in trying to help a loved one through the terminal stages of illness, and the question was raised, "Do we tell our loved one

when he or she is dying?" In the case of one woman (domiciled elderly Church member), she spoke of her reaction at the time of her husband's death:

"At the time I felt bitter that one who had done so much good in his life should finish up in such a helpless condition."

She remembered at that time how she had also felt much the same way at the death of her parents, for after her father's death from a long and painful illness, her mother lasted only a few months owing to the special exertions caused by caring for her husband in those circumstances.

"I remember then that I felt it terribly, and I questioned the justice of it all in the light of their good and faithful lives. But my faith was completely shaken when my husband cried out to God to take him away as he had no longer any wish to live."

But there was another more important aspect to be revealed.

"I never stopped praying during this period of doubt and disbelief, and the only thing I can think of was that I hoped that some kind of purpose would be revealed. This came to me afterwards for I found I was more tolerant towards people who were ill, and this was especially true when I had to look after my sister who later died of cancer."

It was then that she raised the important question of when, or ever, to tell.

"I remember my husband asking me 'how long?' when he was in hospital. I knew full well what he was asking, but I just passed it off as referring to the length of the visiting hour. I just hadn't the courage at the time to take this opportunity to discuss his last wishes in understanding and peace."

She recalled a similar experience which concerned a cousin, actually a minister of religion, who died a few years ago. "His wife told me afterwards that although both knew at the time that he was dying they never had the courage to confide in each other." This question had stayed with her ever since her husband's death and she had decided to

give instructions to her doctor and minister that they must inform her of the truth of the situation if it should arise in her own case.

"You see I want it to be different in my case, so that I can make preparations with my family in the right atmosphere of confidence and truthfulness."

It was interesting that she had been greatly influenced by an article she had read in a copy of the British Weekly publication, entitled "Yes, we are right to prepare for dying" (August 27th, 1970), where a Baptist minister, hearing that he had a few weeks to live, recorded this message for the members of his congregation as his last word to them all. She then read to me the following section of the address which had changed her attitude:

"Because my wife and I know fully the facts and nothing has been hidden (regarding his condition), we have been able to have much more wonderful fellowship together than would have been possible if there had been suspicion and tension between us, one perhaps knowing the truth and the other not. We have been able to face the future very frankly. I have been able to discuss with my wife and daughter the possibilities of their future and share with them my business matters as well as my inmost thoughts."

She strongly felt the necessity and wisdom of this procedure if it was possible to follow that example, and her whole outlook had changed accordingly. However this was an exceptional case, and not all who raised the question had come through to the same kind of decision. One other woman remembered this kind of experience which had left her in a state of mental disquiet ever since.

"When I think back I was shattered when he said, 'I don't want to die' - and I knew that he knew! To be honest I still relive this experience even now, and yet I couldn't say anything at the time."

There were many cases of men and women who took a long time to work through their grief, and this was made more difficult by the

experience of loneliness. I heard women say more than once that the gap left by the death of their husband had never been filled, and one expressed it in the words, "There is no one now to talk to and discuss things with." Yet the most severe and long-standing grief was occasioned by the death of children, and in all these cases the women concerned had never really got over their grief even though a considerable time had elapsed. One particular case concerned the death of a son on active service during the last War. When she heard the news (in 1944) she collapsed and was under sedation for 6 months. Later she said, "I nearly went under myself. I just lost heart, and I told the minister I had lost my faith altogether." After being a faithful church attender and worker she cut herself off from the Church completely. She described how, after a year or eighteen months, something came to her and she said to herself, "God is in this somehow, and there is some purpose He will make clear." She was never very sure what this purpose was, and yet her faith slowly came back in spite of this uncertainty. When her husband died later she remembered that the grief was nothing like as hard as the case of her son's death. It was significant that later in the interview when she was asked whether she believed in a reunion with loved ones in an After-life, she had no hesitation in replying, "I know that I will meet my son." Another woman, whose eldest son was killed during the 1st World War described it as the biggest blow she had ever experienced and which she estimated she had never really got over during her life.

"He served in Palestine before he went to France, but he never got leave on his return to Europe. He was killed in August in the last year of the war. I still have his photograph on the wall, and I always kept the postcards he sent me from Palestine (some of them seemed to be dried out after being in water)."

When she spoke about this it almost appeared that the death of her son had happened the previous week, and she relived the experience of those far-off years with sorrow and anguish. It did not appear that the death of their husbands brought about such a traumatic upheaval in their lives.

There were others who spoke about a lasting regret that their loved one had to go into hospital to die and they were unable to comfort them at the end. In this connection what happened at the end - the partner's last words or even the circumstances of their death, appears to have had considerable importance to the surviving partner and made a lasting impression on them. One woman described it in this way:

"When he died I just had to get over it. Some days I am all right, but other days it is just terrible. I took comfort that he was taken first, and when I think about it this way then a contentment comes over me. I never feel alone. It is like God is on one side of me and my husband is on the other. I really feel contentment because he said to me before he died, 'Be brave Jeanie. God is with you now and always.' The memory of his words keeps me going."

Where the Church proved to be a major source of support in and after the crisis situation there are references to the faithful visitation and help given by Ministers, office-bearers and members. It was interesting to note the gratitude of people who remembered the daily visits (in certain cases) made by a Minister at the critical stage of their partner's terminal illness, and how in one case this was continued in visiting the surviving partner on the anniversary of her husband's death. But if they remembered the comfort and reassurance they had received from the Minister, it was generally contained in quite simple statements of hope recorded in the interviews. One woman, who lost her young daughter through meningitis, spoke of the

words of comfort in the following way:

"The minister explained to me that God had a place for her above. God was frightened that something worse might happen to her and took her home to Him."

Then another woman particularly mentioned that the minister had helped her to go out and meet people, and also how his support had taken a great load of worry from her mind. It must be added that others experienced great disappointment at receiving little or no help, and how they missed pastoral visits after the funeral. While this was a minority experience, it is also pointed to the question of pastoral priorities in the care of the bereaved and the difficulty of communication when visits of this kind are actually made. One woman made the comment of the Church's lack of help, and added, "When the minister came to see me, he didn't help me much." Obviously for some people it is a question of trying to answer unresolved difficulties concerning death and personal faith, and the minister must always try to follow the lead when it is given and help them to clarify their own thoughts towards a deeper understanding of the faith.

Amongst non-members it was interesting to find 2 cases where women had emigrated to make a new start for their families in an attempt to adjust after bereavement. While most were prepared to make adjustment by staying in their own homes (and some spoke of their determination not to take hasty decisions to go and stay with relatives), in two cases successful adjustment was concluded by going to live with other members of the family. In no case reported was there any reference to faith or life in the Church as a factor in adjustment. The main reasons for successful adjustment included the care and the help of family, the opportunities of meeting people

in employment, and trying to be helpful to others less fortunate than themselves. But there were many cases of distress reported which had not been easily overcome; and examples of this included depression, associated with the strain of nursing invalid partners or elderly relatives over many years, and a dependence on the deceased which had left the surviving partner vulnerable in a feeling of loneliness. This loneliness was apparent in comments like, "I feel his passing more now than before." One man expressed his helplessness in these words, "I missed my wife more than I can say. She understood my troubles and knew just what to do. After she went I had to do everything myself." In the latter case the depression developed when other members of the family died. "It was so hard. My wife died in 1955. Her sister in 1956, and then it was her mother in 1957. Last of all my father in 1958. It gets you down when it never seems to end - it's nothing but trouble!" It underlined the feelings of inadequacy expressed by many men when they are left on their own, and how so many are prepared to live with relatives or enter Homes to get over the inadequacy and feeling of loneliness.

Again there were cases where the care of a loved one during terminal illness had brought difficulty and upset. One woman remarked, "I have always been troubled because at the time I tried to give my husband the impression that he would recover." She went on to say, "My worry is that now I feel sure he knew." Although there was no reference to faith or church life as a major factor in support, the amount of family help was quite considerable. It is possible or conceivable that lack of faith could account for the greater element of distress or continuing grief recorded in these cases of non-members,

but it is significant that of those experiencing successful adjustment no one expressly mentioned faith as a factor even though a considerable minority in this sample were lapsed members of the Church.

(ii) Other crisis histories

The great majority of the crisis situations described above related to bereavement. But there were other situations of considerable interest recorded, and they varied from personal illness to a crisis of family relationships when a Jewish woman became a Christian. One woman described her greatest crisis situation in the story of a daughter's unhappy marriage, and how she had to bear the situation on her own because her husband refused to become involved. One man spoke about a broken engagement owing to religious denominational differences involving the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches, and another related a complicated story of family tragedy where a brother had wasted the savings of the respondent after an attempt to save his career and prospects. Perhaps the most pathetic and tragic story was told by a woman who had tried to help a young man in deep personal trouble before he eventually committed suicide. This led to a very severe breakdown, and a complete severance of her relationship with the group she had been associated with. Her adjustment has been a long, difficult period of trying to move out of a situation of isolation to some kind of caring ministry to elderly people in need of help. But unfortunately for her, it could not be described as a successful adjustment, and a further breakdown in health complicated and, in fact, retarded the process of recovery.

(b) Retirement

While it has already been said that many men found life difficult if left on their own, it is true that those who coped reasonably well domestically were in most cases men who had cared for sick wives before their partner died. Many widows expressed a sense of gratitude that their husbands had predeceased them if only because they had lived with considerable worry as to their ability to be able to cope alone in the home. Almost a half of the husbands of widows interviewed had died before retirement age, and many others who had reached retirement did not survive very long to enjoy it or were plagued by bad health in the retirement years.

There were some who retired with thankfulness if only to be spared business worries, but others suffered more than a loss of income and greatly missed their old working associations and the kind of recreational activities only possible on a higher pay than retirement pension. Men with a professional or business background had more special interests they could satisfy during retirement, and the keen sportsman utilised the greater leisure time with real enthusiasm as long as fitness prevailed. One man commented, as retirement gave him freedom from routine duties associated with his working day, "I could take up certain special interests, previously denied me, and greatly enjoyed new spheres of work in Church Assembly committees." Another professional man who retired from teaching said, "I missed the contact with school and pupils at the beginning. But after a year I settled down and began to translate Latin works and continued my research into Celtic place-names in Scotland." One who said that "with the right attitude of mind you can fill your day more than

adequately" obviously came near to the truth, but it did not prove all that easy for the majority to follow that advice. Those in the lower occupational groups depended upon hobbies or gardening (including allotments), but many were more than keen to take some kind of part-time job. This helped to pass the time and gave them some additional income (up to the earnings limit), but above all it gave them a sense of usefulness within the community. One even expressed regret that it was not possible for him to take up part-time employment owing to his wife's illness, but that was an exception. However it is possible to understand the remarks of one non-member who said that he put off retirement to the last possible moment (until he was 75 years) just because he wanted something useful to do in his later years. He concluded, "They told me that I would have to finish as a nightwatchman because they didn't want to find me dead on the job!"

Very few actually wished they had continued full-time working beyond retirement (even if this had been possible), but only two spoke about the necessity of making preparation for retirement. In one case where it was stated that retirement was difficult to accept, the respondent said:

"I didn't want to retire, I had to on medical advice. I felt a terrific drop after finishing working and having so much time on my hands. The arthritis troubled me, and in a way it softened the blow. But we should be prepared for retirement. I suppose it is more of a mental attitude really. I think we should try to get something useful to do for other people."

In his case he tried to offer his services as a craftsman to help handicapped people at Simon Square in Edinburgh. The other case, where retirement proved easier, was interesting in the way the transition from working life to retirement was helped by the experience

of an illness which made the respondent face up to the demands of retirement in good time.

"It made me think about it, and then start to do something about it as well. We need more help in this matter, and proper preparation for retirement is really necessary."

Regarding single women who discussed this theme in their answers, it was found that the majority of teachers welcomed retirement very largely because of the change in teaching-methods and the difficulty in enforcing discipline. Nurses, who were interviewed, found great difficulty in making the adjustment following retirement, and in all cases seemed to feel that their lives lacked meaning or purpose when their life-work was over. In one case the respondent answered:

"I found retirement very difficult and I didn't like it at all. It was as though I felt I had no right to retire. It wasn't that I couldn't fill in my time with interests, for I had plenty of these. I just didn't seem to be useful anymore to anybody."

In another the woman felt so useless that it precipitated a crisis of faith. She expressed herself most strongly in all this, and concluded that it was one of the most difficult things she had ever faced. It is hardly wise to generalise from a small number of cases, but it did seem to be a matter of interest that three interviews in this category should produce similar answers on retirement. A number of widows commented on the earnings rule (since modified), which applies to the retired for tax purposes. Also the loss of pension, which was occupational and so was terminated on the death of the husband, which had brought about financial difficulties irrespective of the level of State pensions.

Analysis of the Answers with Tables of Results

(a) The nature of the crisis situation and the categories of major support.

The crisis situation described by the great majority of the respondents was the death of someone close to the person concerned.

In the case of Instit.(Homes) it can be analysed as follows:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Death of spouse	10	14
children	1	3
parents	4	20
siblings		5

In addition there were 10 other crisis situations recorded of a different order. Below Table 17 shows the distribution of the major forms of support, including family (close relations), friends and neighbours. The number who expressed a clear and definite support by the Church (through its ministers and members) are also included in this table.

In the case of Instit.(Homes), 9 indicated that they had no major support from any person or group. The majority received their greatest support from family or close relatives, namely 65%, but the total for friends is as high as 26%. Where the great majority had church membership either at present or before admission, the number who made special mention of church support was only 50%.

In the case of Domiciled elderly members, the crisis situations can also be analysed as follows:-

TABLE 17. The impact of crisis situations

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
death of spouse	15	28
children	2	6
parents		16
siblings		4

In addition there were 16 other crisis situations recorded of a different kind.

For the domiciled elderly, 18 recorded no major support from any person or group. Again the majority who are members of a Church received their major support from the family, namely 71%. The figure for support from friends was lower at 19%. In this case where all are members of churches, the number who specifically mention church support is higher at 69%.

In the case of Non-members (domiciled elderly), the crisis situations can also be analysed as follows:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
death of spouse	7	15
children		1
parents		3
siblings		1

In addition there were 4 other crisis situations recorded of a different nature.

Finally the non-members of the domiciled elderly group show a high figure for family support at 81%, but the figure for church support is low at 13%.

(Non-members), we find the number of crisis situations is large (including as it does the Wedderburn Highways). The number of crisis situations is large (including as it does the Wedderburn Highways). The number of crisis situations is large (including as it does the Wedderburn Highways).

TABLE 17. The nature of the main support given in crisis situations to elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

Main Support	INSTIT.(HOMES)		DOM. ELDERLY			
	M (17)	F (49)	Members M(22) F(65)		Non-Members M(9) F(22)	
Family	8	29	13	39	6	16
Friends	4	11	3	11	1	2
Neighbours	2	3		7	1	1
None	3	6	6	8	1	3
Church	9	24	14	46	1	3

The figures for 'Church' indicate definite support through ministers or members.

(b) Adjustment to the crisis of Bereavement

In Tables 18 and 19 we are shown the numbers of those making a successful adjustment to a crisis situation (in the great majority of cases, bereavement). In comparing the Elms with Wedderburn (Table 18) we find the ratio of successful compared with difficult adjustment in the proportion of 3:2 in the Elms; while it is reversed to 1:3.5 at Wedderburn. Exactly half of those making successful adjustment in the Elms made some specific reference to faith or life within the Church as reasons for successful adjustment. In the case of Wedderburn it is only one third, but the figures are rather small (2 out of 6).

In Table 19, when the figures are taken together for Instit. (Homes), we find the number of difficult adjustments is large (including as it does the Wedderburn figures), but again a half of the successful

adjustments include a specific reference to faith or life in the Church as reasons for this adjustment. When we turn to the domiciled elderly (church members), the proportion of successful adjustments to those found difficult is exactly 2:1. Further 55% of those making a successful adjustment actually make special reference to faith or church life as reasons for this adjustment.

For non-members, the number of successful as opposed to difficult adjustments is exactly the same. In no case do we find recorded any special reference to faith or church life as reasons for successful adjustment, even in the case of those who were lapsed members.

TABLE 18. The record of adjustment in the crisis of bereavement of elderly residents in 2 Institutions

Kind of adjustment	ELMS		WEDDERBURN	
	M (10)	F (20)	M (6)	F (21)
successful	6	12	1	5
difficult	4	8	5	16
with faith or church life	3	6	1	1

TABLE 19. The record of adjustment in the crisis of bereavement of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

Kind of adjustment	INSTIT.(HOMES)		DOM. ELDERLY			
	M(17)	F(49)	MEMBERS M(22)	F(65)	NON-MEMBERS M(9)	F(22)*
successful	8	20	17	41	3	12
difficult	9	29	5	24	6	9
with faith or church life	5	9	9	23		

* 1(F) no crisis history recorded

(c) Adjustment to the crisis of Retirement

In Tables 20 and 21 we are shown the numbers of those who made successful adjustment compared to difficult adjustment in Retirement. Successful adjustment compared to difficult was found in the proportion of just over 2:1 in the case of the Elms, and just under 1:2 at Wedderburn (Abbeyfield scores resembled the Elms). For church members, the figures for London Road members are 3:1 by proportion, and for members of other Churches it is just under 5:4. In the case of non-members the proportion is 5:6.

Using the Registrar General's scale of occupations an attempt is made to see if successful adjustment is related to occupational group, and also whether single women have a higher score of successful adjustment. If we use the first 3 groups of the Registrar General's scale to include Professional to Skilled workers, then in the case of successful adjustment we find the following:

- (a) at the Elms, 11 in this grouping compared to 8 respondents.
- (b) at Wedderburn, 2 in this grouping compared to 6 respondents.
- (c) at Abbeyfield 4 in this grouping compared to - respondents.
- (d) at London Road 20 in this grouping compared to 4 respondents.
- (e) other Churches 16 in this grouping compared to 3 respondents.
- (f) non-members 2 in this grouping compared to 8 respondents

A clear majority of those who are church members (London Road and other Churches) and make a successful adjustment to retirement are in the first 3 groups of the Registrar-General's scale. This is also true of Abbeyfield, but a smaller majority in the case of the Elms.

4. Partly skilled workers.

5. Unskilled workers.

TABLE This position is reversed in the case of Wedderburn and the non-members of the Parish survey sample. It is interesting to note that of the total number involved (excluding those husbands who had not retired before death), we have similar figures for Wedderburn and non-members in relation to skilled as compared to semi- or unskilled workers. Professional and skilled include 6 in both Wedderburn and non-members with 17 and 16 respectively in the semi- and unskilled groups.

In the case of single women, we find a clear majority making a successful adjustment to retirement only in the Elms and the London Road sample of the domiciled elderly. The figures are 11 out of 15, and 14 out of 17 respectively. The smaller figures for Abbeyfield and non-members (domiciled elderly) show an equal proportion, but in the Wedderburn and Other Churches sample of the domiciled elderly there is a clear minority. The figures again are small, namely 2 out of 9, and 2 out of 7 respectively.

It is significant that nearly a half of the husbands of widows (of the whole sample) died before retirement, actually 36 out of 76. Also a number of men who made a successful adjustment to retirement claimed that they had been helped considerably by the opportunity of taking a part-time job. In point of fact 14 made mention of this in their answers.

In regard to the above the Registrar General's five social classes include the following:

1. Leading professions and business.
2. Lesser professions and small business.
3. Skilled workers - manual and non-manual.
4. Partly skilled workers.
5. Unskilled workers.

In the case of Widows we take the husband's occupation.

TABLE 20. The record of adjustment in the crisis of Retirement of elderly residents in Institutions

Kind of adjustment	Reg.Gen. Scale	M (10)	ELMS WIDOW (4)*	F Single (16)**
EASY (19)	I			1
	II			5
	III	2	1	2
	IV	4		1
	V	1		2

DIFFICULT (9)	I			
	II		1	1
	III	3		2
	IV		1	1
	V			

* 1 not retired (Scale I)

** 1 no occup.

Kind of adjustment	Reg.Gen. Scale	M (6)	WEDDERBURN WIDOW (11)*	F Single (10)**
EASY (8)	I			
	II			
	III		2	
	IV	2	2	
	V			2

DIFFICULT (15)	I			
	II			1
	III	1		2
	IV	3	2	2
	V		2	2

* 3 not retired (Scale II, III, IV)

** 1 no occup.

Kind of adjustment	Reg.Gen. Scale	M (1)	ABBNEYFIELD WIDOW (4)*	F Single (4)
EASY (4)	I			
	II	1	1	1
	III			1
	IV			
	V			

DIFFICULT (2)	I			
	II			1
	III			1
	IV			
	V			

* 3 not retired (Scale II)

In the case of Widows we take the husband's occupation.

TABLE 21. The record of adjustment in the crisis of Retirement of elderly residents who were privately domiciled

Kind of adjustment	Reg.Gen. Scale	LONDON ROAD		F.Single (17)
		M (10)	WIDOW (13)*	
EASY (24)	I	1	1	
	II	2		4
	III	5		7
	IV		1	2
	V			1
DIFFICULT (8)	I		1	
	II			1
	III	2		2
	IV		2	
	V			

* 8 not retired (Scale II, 4; Scale III, 3; Scale IV, 1)

Kind of adjustment	Reg.Gen. Scale	M(12)	OTHER CHURCHES		F.Single (7)
			WIDOW (28)*		
EASY (19)	I		1		
	II	6	1		1
	III	2	4		1
	IV	1	2		
	V				
DIFFICULT (16)	I				
	II		1		2
	III	3	2		3
	IV		4		
	V		1		

* 12 not retired (Scale I, 3; II, 3; III, 3; IV, 2; V, 1)

Kind of adjustment	Reg.Gen. Scale	M(9)	NON-MEMBERS		F.Single (6)
			WIDOW (16)*		
EASY (10)	I				
	II		1		
	III				1
	IV	2	1		2
	V	2	1		
DIFFICULT (12)	I				
	II		1		
	III	1	2		
	IV	3			1
	V	1	1		2

* 9 not retired (Scale III, 4; IV, 4; V, 1).

Interpretation of the data according to the Sub-hypotheses

(a) That the Church, through its ministry and members, provides a major support in personal crisis history

Following an examination of the interview material and the analysis of the results, it was found that the great majority of crisis situations described by respondents concerned bereavement. While the major support came from the family or close relatives, the Church was remembered as having made a special contribution in terms of support in a great majority of cases among the domiciled elderly members. This was not found to the same extent in the Homes where only a half of the respondents answered in this way. Non-members recorded a very low figure of Church support.

The majority of respondents, both in the Homes and among the domiciled elderly, received the greatest support from family or close relatives during the crisis described in the interviews. This is hardly surprising and it confirms what might have been expected. But a quarter of residents in the Homes who received major support from friends points to the higher proportion of elderly spinsters in the Homes sample.

Again it might be assumed that a large majority of church members would remember the important support that the Church offered during a crisis situation if this was bereavement. But this was not evident in the case of the Homes where only a half stated this was true. However over two-thirds of the domiciled elderly members had this experience and recorded special church support. It appears that the Church's record in ministering to the bereaved may not be as good as the Church imagines, especially if it is argued that a favourable

answer was likely because a minister acted as the interviewer. This could be raised especially in connection with the London Road interviews. In point of fact the figures for the total domiciled elderly members show no significant difference as between the answers from London Road members and those from Other Churches. It actually works out as 7 (males) and 22 (females) compared with 7 (males) and 24 (females) which makes up the total of those expressing remembrance of the church's support.

The figures for family support in the case of non-members are very high, but church support has a very low score. When we consider the number of lapsed members in that sample it again underlines the point made above that the Church's record is not beyond criticism. The interview material gives many examples of respondents gratitude for the services of the Church during and after bereavement, and this provides an impressive testimony. But there is a significant minority who express deep disappointment at the lack of help, and we are reminded that this is a feature stressed in other examples of research. In one sample from the domiciled elderly, namely the London Road group.

(b) That church members are successful in making adjustment to the crisis situations of bereavement and retirement

Church members were successful in making adjustment to their crisis situation, namely bereavement in the majority of cases, by a clear majority in the case of the domiciled elderly members and to a lesser extent in the Homes. Only in the case of Wedderburn was there a definite reversal of this trend.

proportion of successful adjustment for church members living in

1. In both the Homes and the domiciled elderly samples, it was found that a half of those making successful adjustment made special reference to the part that faith and life in the Church played in the process. In the case of non-members, the number making a successful adjustment equalled the difficult cases. No reference was made to faith or life in the Church as making a difference in the process of adjustment.

2. A clear majority of church members, whose occupations were listed in the top 3 groups of the Registrar General's scale, made a successful adjustment to retirement. This information was either given by the respondent or supplied by the widow in the case of those deceased. In the Wedderburn and non-member's sample, where the number of semi-skilled or unskilled workers was high, a large majority of difficult adjustments were recorded.

3. In the case of single women, no conclusive evidence of successful adjustment to retirement was found, as a clear majority was recorded in only one sample from the Homes, namely the Elms, and again in one sample from the domiciled elderly, namely the London Road group.

The high figures of difficult adjustment from the Wedderburn results affect the total results for the Homes quite considerably. It follows that difficult adjustment to bereavement could well be an important reason, among others, why certain women (and men) are found in such Homes. Although there are many reasons why people find it difficult to stay on their own, this difficulty to adjust their lives after bereavement must surely be considered as important. The proportion of successful adjustment for church members living in

their own homes is a high one, and this can be related to the high scores of contentment that are shown in this group. This is the only group where such a significant correlation is indicated. We found that a half of the cases of successful adjustment, at the Elms and among the domiciled elderly members, made specific mention of the part faith (and their connection with the Church) had played in this experience. The fact that so many made explicit in their answers something which is not often referred to openly must be accounted as significant evidence of the influence of faith on their lives.

When we consider retirement further, a clear majority of the domiciled elderly members in the first 3 groups of the Registrar General's scale made a successful adjustment. This was true of the Abbeyfield members, and, to a lesser extent, in the Elms sample. The position was reversed in the case of the Wedderburn sample and the non-members, where there were 3 times as many men who were previously employed in the semi-skilled and unskilled groups. From this evidence there is a high correlation between professional and skilled occupations and successful adjustment. By virtue of their education, interests and financial resources they have a considerable advantage over the other group, and it is possible for them to retain status in society after retirement which is often denied to the others. From the answers received it was clear that a number of men would have found retirement very difficult unless they had had an opportunity of taking part-time employment, and some almost resented the fact that this was not open to them. It was a significant fact that nearly a half of the husbands of widows interviewed died before

retirement, and emphasises the considerable preponderance of females over males in the elderly age-groups.

As mentioned previously there was no conclusive evidence regarding successful adjustment to retirement on the part of single women. In the Elms sample there were quite a number of professional women which had some bearing on the high rate of successful adjustment. But it is difficult to advance any reason why this should have been so in only the London Road group of the domiciled elderly sample.

Summary

Following the procedure in the last chapter, the interpretation of the data was presented in relation to the sub-hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the study. It was shown that the great majority of crisis situations concerned bereavement, and while the major support came from the family or close relatives it was found that the Church made a special contribution in terms of support for the great majority of cases among the domiciled elderly church members. This was only true for a half of the Homes population and very few of the non-members among the domiciled elderly. In respect of adjustment to crisis situations (largely bereavement) a clear majority of domiciled elderly church members were successful in making adjustment. In the Homes this was found to be less so particularly in the case of the local authority institution. Further a clear majority of church members, whose occupations are included in the first three groups of the Registrar General's scale, made a successful adjustment to retirement. However no conclusive evidence was forthcoming regarding successful adjustment to retirement in the case of single women.

In the next chapter we consider the eschatological beliefs of the elderly sample particularly in relation to death, judgment, and hopes and fears of heaven and hell.

In this chapter we present the interview material of the third section of the questionnaire (referred to as Section C), and the same order is followed as in Chapters 5 and 6.

Description of the Interview Material

(a) Fear of Old Age

The great majority had no fear of getting old especially when they had enjoyed reasonably good health. The increasing burden of old age was associated with bad health, growing infirmity and loneliness; as one woman put it, "You don't feel old until you are unwell. You take ill when you have always been right before." Perhaps the most common remark was "At my age you've had your life, so what is the point of worrying about old age?" Still it was obvious in the interviews that many elderly people are quite annoyed to be spoken of as old, and in all truth their chronological age does not seem to fit their general state of fitness and active pursuits. Answers from non-members followed the general trend just described, and one described age more in terms of "how you feel at the time" and "you only feel old when you are ready to give in."

(b) Fear of Death

Again the great majority had no fear of death. Most felt that they had lived their lives to the allotted span or beyond, and they were quite prepared to die. Some put it more bluntly: "When it is your turn to go then you die." Others expressed the same sentiment

CHAPTER 7

ESCHATOLOGICAL BELIEF OF THE ELDERLY SAMPLE

In this chapter we present the interview material of the third section of the questionnaire (referred to as Section C), and the same order is followed as in Chapters 5 and 6.

Description of the Interview Material

(a) Fear of Old Age

The great majority had no fear of getting old especially when they had enjoyed reasonably good health. The increasing burden of old age was associated with bad health, growing infirmity and loneliness; as one woman put it, "You don't feel old until you are unwell. You take ill when you have always been right before." Perhaps the most common remark was "At my age you've had your life, so what is the point of worrying about old age?" Still it was obvious in the interviews that many elderly people are quite annoyed to be spoken of as old, and in all truth their chronological age does not seem to fit their general state of fitness and active pursuits. Answers from non-members followed the general trend just described, and one described age more in terms of "how you feel at the time" and "you only feel old when you are ready to give in."

(b) Fear of Death

Again the great majority had no fear of death. Most felt that they had lived their lives to the allotted span or beyond, and they were quite prepared to die. Some put it more bluntly: "When it is your turn to go then you die." Others expressed the same sentiment

in religious terms. In this case they spoke about "our appointed time," "when God calls us" or "I'm ready to meet my Maker." In fact one of the domiciled elderly remarked, "Death isn't a loss; it's a promotion." But there were some for whom death would be a welcome release, and that was due to illness, a feeling of uselessness or loneliness.

One man had overcome the fear of death owing to a war-time experience when his prayers were answered, while a woman remembered her war-time experiences nursing in France where death was always peaceful in the end. Another woman overcame her fear after nursing a mother and sister through their last illnesses. "After this I realised that it had taught me a lot. I had lots of stupid fears about death, but after, I could face the prospect of death and cope with all kinds of trouble." Others made it clear that they had overcome fear through the manner in which their loved ones had died, and one woman described her reassurance on this question as due to a very vivid sense of the presence of those who had died that came to her frequently. In all these accounts the people concerned stressed the fact that the actual moment of death was very peaceful and in consequence they had no fear for their own death.

Those who had a fear of death included one woman with a particularly disturbing childhood experience in the W. Indies where she had been associated with other children in ritual practices of taking leave of the dead by touching the corpse. A few had religious worries about their fitness to die and had a dread of what would happen after death. There was one case of a woman who had a premonition concerning the deaths of her mother and brother, and had a real fear

that this might be repeated in the future. As a result of that she had a fear about death in general, and in her own death in particular.

However the greatest fear was of the process of dying, and almost a half of the total respondents, equally male and female, expressed such a fear although they expressed it in different ways. In most cases it was a fear of a painful or protracted death, and was supported by personal experience after witnessing such a death in the life of someone close to them. Many prayed for a speedy end, and not only to escape undue pain or long suffering, but also to prevent them being a burden to others, especially their family. It must be added that this was repeated many times in the course of the interviews. Allied with a fear of extended suffering and hardship was the fear of losing one's faculties and remaining utterly helpless in a sick bed. One of the Wedderburn men expressed this kind of fear by pointing to the cases of this kind that could be found 'upstairs', that is, patients in the geriatric wards in the same building as the Home. While some were frightened to go to hospital to die for fear of encountering death in a strange place, others (and actually more) had a great fear of being left on their own to die. Yet it must be said that most would have agreed with the comment, "I'd rather die in my own home when the time comes" - and this came through in the views of those in Homes who remembered what might have been. In some cases the fear was centred on the worry of what would happen to an invalid spouse if they died first. It was significant that many people did worry about this, and their fear was not for their own death but a concern for the one left behind in difficult circumstances. Very few particularized on the nature of

the illness or disease that registered the greatest fear regarding the prospect of dying, but many summed up their real fear at the thought of ending their days as a helpless invalid where existence only depended upon modern medical facilities.

In the case of non-members very similar answers were recorded. Quite a number faced the prospect bravely and fatalistically, while many spoke of their fear of a period of long suffering and any burden that might be placed on family or friends. The prayer to be taken quickly was heard often. Two women remarked that they had no fear of death and were prepared for it, but afterwards added that to be honest they wanted to hang on to life as long as possible. "I sometimes wish I was away, but after I am ready to fight on and keep it"; and also, "I am ready to go at any time, but then I think that life can be sweet and I want to hang on to it." Two men spoke of having no fear of death during war-time experiences and this was explained by the common reassurance, "It will always take the chap next to you in action." However, one man who had been decorated for bravery in the War actually expressed a very strong remembrance of fear when he had to go into the 'no-man's land' to try to rescue the missing. It is hard to imagine that any person under the circumstances of war has no feeling of fear, but it is quite another matter if he is able to overcome it in decisive action. One woman said she had no fear of death until she had a heart attack, but since that illness she had been more frightened of death after she got her life back.

"I was close to death with my heart attack. I had dreams of Chinese kind of pagodas continually before me in different shapes and sizes. Since then I have a fear of death because I am frightened to lose my life after getting it back. Whenever I hear people say that they are tired of life and want

to die, I just say to them it is nonsense. I am glad to have mine back. I am glad to just enjoy my little house and go out most days. I feel I have more enjoyment in life now than I had before, and I can't bear the idea of losing it."

Lastly, another woman had overcome her fear of death as a result of hospital experience.

"When I had to go to hospital for an operation I was very frightened I might die - for I had always had a fear of death, but when I was there I managed to get over it. It must have been the care and kindness I had from the nurses and doctors, but ever since I know that I have no fear."

In this varied account it seems clear that most people have a definite fear of the process of dying but think of this primarily in terms of the effect it will have on others. In all their answers the interviewer was impressed by the sincerity of their answers to this question, and this seems to be borne out in the experience of individuals who have spoken to the writer on this topic in the light of personal family history involving the care of this elderly generation.

(c) Belief in an After-life

The great majority of the respondents believed in an After-life. Some expressed it in terms of a scriptural assurance which was the most important article of faith, or more generally as the expected fulfilment of this life. It was common to hear the view expressed, "This cannot be the end of all things, and there must be another life after death," and many held on very strongly to the faith they had been taught from childhood. More men were disbelieving than women, with remarks like, "When I die I'm finished" or even agnostic, "no one has come back to tell us," but this was a definite minority attitude.

Only one of the respondents attempted a description of Heaven, as a place "where everything is quiet and peaceful and very beautiful - like a rainbow with all its different colours. Jesus will be there to welcome us and take us in and love us for ever." Another tried a definition in terms of a "peaceful existence where all earthly disputes are done away with." But the majority considered it as basically a place of joy and happiness which one enters immediately after death. A number based their belief on the manner in which their loved ones died. One woman described how the certainty of her faith in an After-life went back to the time of her husband's death.

"I was with him when he died (at 47 years) on the way to hospital in an ambulance. I knew the moment that he died, for it was as though the spirit had left him and I saw his face wreathed in smiles. Then I had a strong feeling that he had been received by God. I have never doubted this, and since then I have been quite sure there is an After-life."

Another woman was convinced by the look in the eyes of the dying husband as though "he saw someone before him," and an ex-nurse repeated this conviction in terms of her nursing experience, "When I remember how some patients died it seemed, by the expression on their faces, as though they saw someone as they slipped away in death." A further example of this kind was reported in another interview where the widow remembered how he, (her husband), always used to come into the house after work and take her hand and say it was good to be home.

"He died just like that. I am so thankful I saw him die, because he was happy when he left this life. I am sure he knew that he was going on to another life, and I feel sure too."

Others found their belief strengthened when they recalled the last words of the dying that seemed to them to promise hope for another

life after death. Then there was the additional assurance of the reality of the presence of the spirit of the departed beside them which sustained them in this life and gave certainty for the future. There were actually 14 cases where the respondents had visions or dreams following the death of a loved one, and in all these cases the experience gave them certainty regarding the reality of an After-life.

The first case of a visionary type of experience is from the Wedderburn interviews where the woman concerned described two incidents from war-time nursing. The first she experienced on night duty in a field hospital when she had a vision of her Father who had died two years previously:

"I was on night duty in the hospital, and it was about the middle of the night as I remember. I suddenly had a feeling that my Father was behind me, and when I turned round I saw his outline but just for an instant and he was gone. I had a peaceful and happy feeling afterwards because I liked him very much."

The second experience was rather different. She went on to speak about another incident which took place outside the hospital when she was taking a walk along a lane in the countryside.

"Suddenly I heard a voice addressing me, 'Tell her the one shall be taken and the other left.' I felt it must be some kind of premonition about the death of someone I knew well. Actually it was not long afterwards that I heard of the death in action of a dear friend's son, and I knew straightaway that I could write to her and reassure her that her son would survive."

It was obvious that these experiences, which did not seem to be repeated, had impressed upon her the reality of another life, and her faith in the After-life had never wavered. Among the domiciled elderly, there was another visionary experience in war-time, this time in the 2nd World

War, which acted as a confirmation regarding the After-life and also as a direction towards her life-work:

"It was in 1941 that it happened. At first I had the strong impression of someone standing beside me, and I was aware of a figure or a presence that I didn't recognise. I knew it was a woman, but when she said she was my mother I knew it was true - although I never knew her on this earth because she died when I was a baby. She made the sign of the Cross over my head, and then her presence vanished. Not long afterwards I heard that my favourite Aunt was seriously ill, and I just knew inside me that I was directed to go and help her. Of course this vision was for a purpose, because from that time I was convinced that nursing would be my vocation for the rest of my life."

Another member of the domiciled elderly group who expressed belief in an After-life had some difficulty in accepting the hope of reunion with loved ones. "But I must say," he continued, "that I have always been impressed by the certainty in this matter of one of my closest friends. He is absolutely sure about this because he had a vision of his dead wife who appeared before him some time after her death." He had found it difficult to be sure in this matter, but his friend's experience went a long way in convincing him of its truth. The last example in this group is taken from the non-member's sample, and shows how this type of experience is found in all the groups interviewed. These visionary experiences took place, first, after her mother's death (actually a few months after), and the night after a neighbour's death:

"As long as I can remember, my mother and her dog used to wait at the window when I was expected back from work in the afternoon. A few months after her death I came home as usual and I was almost terrified to see them as clear as life at the window as I approached the gate. As I got nearer the door the vision of them disappeared. My neighbour had been ill for some time and used to knock upwards on the ceiling when she wanted to draw my attention. It was the night after she died that I awoke suddenly during the night to see this figure before me in a glorious light."

She then described the colour of the hair and details of her dress which corresponded exactly to the neighbour she had known as a close friend of the family. She continued:

"I heard her address me, 'Nan, I'm not away yet.' I couldn't understand what she meant by these words, but I know that it wasn't a nightmare and the detail of her appearance is just as vivid and real in my mind today."

While she had a strong belief in an After-life and this contributed to her certainty, it should also be added that the experiences had been upsetting for her. At the time of the interview she had also suffered the death of her brother (who had stayed with her in the family home) in recent months, and she expressed a real fear that this kind of visionary experience might be repeated.

Turning to dreams, as distinct from visions, three cases from the files of the domiciled elderly are recorded for the interest contained in their particular details. In the first case, the woman had reassurance in two dreams which she remembered soon after the death of her husband:

"I had moved my bed to the living-room after his death, and one night I had a very vivid dream that my husband returned to me and came through the window wearing long flowing robes. All he said to me was 'Be a good lassie, Polly.' Not long after this I remember another dream I had when I saw him quite clearly going up a long staircase, and then he went through large gates which opened inwards. I saw Angels wearing crowns and long cloaks smiling at him as he entered. I feel sure he went into Heaven for he was a good man, and I would like to be with him there."

Then in the second case, the woman had recollections of her parents' deaths:

"As I think back I had a feeling just when my mother died that her soul was being carried away, and I had a nice feeling when my father died for he looked so peaceful and died with a lovely smile on his face."

Her crisis story concerned the death of her eldest daughter who died a long way from home in S. Africa. It was for a deeply religious woman a terrible crisis of faith:

"You hope and pray that someone will get better, but when it doesn't happen you think all your prayers are in vain. I felt so helpless as she was thousands of miles away."

She described a dream that she had a short time after her death:

"In this dream she appeared before me just looking the way I remembered her best, and she was carrying a bouquet of gladioli. She took one of the flowers and handed it to me and said, 'This one you must take care of specially because it cost me dear.' This I felt sure referred to her son who would need special care and attention in the future."

She had a strong belief in an After-life and the certainty that she would meet with her husband and daughter in the next life. In the last example the dream acted as a confirmation for belief in an After-life with the added assurance of comfort and strength in widowhood. This woman recounted a very vivid dream she had some months after her husband's death:

"In my dream I could see my husband standing behind me, and I heard his words clearly; 'Don't you know that I am behind you all the time?' I know that after this dream my faith in an After-life has been stronger, and even in my loneliness I have the feeling that I am not alone."

It is of interest to add that in the recorded interviews only three cases (including one non-member) were found of definite spiritualist belief and practice, and two actually recorded some belief in re-incarnation.

While the great majority expressed belief in an After-life, a smaller number did express a hope that there may be another existence after death with no clear, positive belief. In this category were those who expressed their uncertainty in questions like, "Has science met my husband there. I don't imagine it will be the same as down

removed the possibility of Heaven?", or "How can we be sure when nobody has returned to tell us?". But there was also the interesting question, "How could you recognize people you knew in Heaven?" When we examine the analysis of non-members' replies it is significant that half have a belief in an After-life, and even of those who express doubt there was a majority here who had a hope that it might prove true.

The analysis will show that not all those who stated a belief in an After-life followed it up with an equal conviction that they expected to meet loved ones in Heaven. Those who did believe used words like "meeting again to part no more," and with a note of certainty, "Without any doubt I know that I will meet my dear ones there." Again some were convinced by the words spoken by a dear one before death, and the conviction had stayed with them ever since. Others had a certainty of meeting children who had died, and this was emphasised more strongly than even reunion with their husbands. One woman was quite clear that she would meet her loved ones, but "it won't be on a woman to woman or a man to man basis." She could not elaborate on this thought, but it may have been due to some reference from scripture (Luke ch. 20:27-38; 1 Cor. ch.15:44) or a thought prompted by preaching. For those who had doubt about reunion, there was an interesting case of a woman, among the domiciled elderly, who had married late in life and had only two years married life before her husband's death. She had a very happy experience of marriage in this short time yet she confessed, "I feel sure there is an After-life, but I just cannot be sure that I will meet my husband there. I don't imagine it will be the same as down

here." For many others it was an uncertainty regarding the possibility of recognising dear ones in an After-life, and that seemed to be the major stumbling-block as far as clear belief was concerned. was a small number of non-members who believed in a judgment but these were just as set in their views as the above, and they

(d) Belief in Judgment and Eternal Punishment. For there is so much

As the analysis shows a very large minority of church members (in Homes or among the domiciled elderly) believed in a Judgment after death. It was firmly expressed that we are accountable to God for our actions on earth, and a number gave some scriptural warrant for their views, for example, in the Parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke ch. 45:19-31 and Revelation ch. 6:108). Some stated that they kept to the old beliefs, which they understood to mean that those who had done evil in this life must face a judgment in the next. Some others felt that only those who had very evil things would face a judgment in this sense. The majority opinion can be summed up in the statement, "God will ask us what we have made of this life," and so turned the question away from the actions of others to an examination of their own lives and their responsibilities. Only one actually lamented the fact that the judgment theme had largely disappeared from modern preaching, and seemed convinced that preaching should return to a clearly-expressed judgment theology. Many, who were bewildered by the age in which they lived, felt that the modern generation had largely forsaken the old morality and consequently must face judgment. "If you believe in right and wrong, then there must be a judgment at the end." A small minority expressed the opinion that judgment only applied to this life; and one woman in the domiciled elderly

group, also went on to say, "I believe judgment takes place here on earth; I believe in punishment for our wrongs for in this life we suffer for our sinfulness."

It was a small number of non-members who believed in a judgment but these were just as set in their views as the above, and they stated that the world today needed judgment, "for there is so much wickedness around." Here too there was a respondent who stood by a certain interpretation of the Biblical standpoint by saying, "The Bible says so...and I believe it!"

Amongst the church members, one Roman Catholic woman indicated that she accepted the Church's doctrine of Purgatory, but it was interesting to hear a Protestant speak of a period of preparation after death so that "we may be made right for a higher service in Heaven."

It was a small number who accepted the idea of Eternal Punishment, and a majority of those who believed in judgment could not accept this doctrine. In the interview replies this was expressed most emphatically, and very few of those who remembered the preaching of Hell-fire in a previous generation actually accepted this teaching in their life-time. In fact the majority reacted very strongly against it from the days of their youth, and one or two actually described nightmares they had experienced as young people as a result of this kind of preaching. One woman said:

"I can remember these sermons well as a child. I was brought up as a 'Wee Free'. I had awful nightmares, and they always came back to me and terrified me at night!"

A man, who experienced this kind of preaching during his youth in the

north of Scotland (also from the domiciled elderly group) went on to say:

"I still remember this clearly although it took place in my youth. One time after a service I came home crying and shouting, 'I don't want to go to burning hell, Mother'. This kind of thing made me terribly frightened in my younger days. Thank goodness I believe that our God is a God of love."

The majority said that it was contrary to their basic faith in an Almighty and ever-loving God. "An all-merciful God will not take revenge on His people for their sins." Some added that eternal punishment would, in any case, defeat all that Christ had achieved in His Ministry and Death, and believed that "Christ will get all to come to Him in the end." It would be no exaggeration to say that the idea of endless punishment was anathema to them, and many felt that the doctrine in preaching and teaching had frightened people rather than helped them in their faith. When they tried to explain the reasons for this preaching, they suggested that it was intended as a kind of deterrent to keep people away from an evil life. The majority believed that it had produced a reaction of horror at the prospect of a God who could permit such a dreadful punishment for the 'condemned'.

The minority who did accept this doctrine stated that Hell was a necessary punishment to right all the wrongs in this life, even to the extent that "if man does not accept Christ he must be made to suffer." As one put it:

"Man will be cut off by his own defiance even after death,"

and

"Repentance at the last moment is not right, for why should people who live bad lives get the same judgment as good people and escape punishment?"

It seemed as though those who had a strong evangelistic faith held to a literal interpretation of the scriptural evidence, and one woman went further when she said:

"It is true that the Lord wishes to save all, but what is the use of preaching the gospel of the Cross if everybody is to be saved without repentance. There is a heaven, but there must be a hell and punishment."

Some believed in a state of Hell experienced in this life, and this was conceived in terms of separation where the isolation resulted from man's perverse and sinful nature. One described it as experiencing "hell within us," but concluded that in the end God's forgiveness would overcome all our sins and failures. Non-members who remembered 'Hell-fire' preaching were adamant that they had never accepted the doctrine, and one said, "People would laugh at you if you started talking like that today!" In fact only one concluded, "I sometimes think it may be true," and it was more a result of his reflections on the state of the world than theological conviction.

It was interesting to hear that a number of respondents had never discussed questions on 'the last things' with ministers, friends or even members of their family. One of the domiciled elderly commented:

"I have never discussed these questions with any friends. But I think more and more on those questions as I get older. You have got to live with some kind of faith, that there is a power behind things in this world and something to look forward to after death."

Another volunteered the information,

"I have never talked to anyone like this before, but then no-one has ever asked me questions like this before."

One man said that he had always found it difficult to talk about deep things of a faith with anyone else - even his dear ones, while one

woman felt that she could not have attempted to answer the questions, particularly in this last section, unless she had confidence in the interviewer in terms of confidentiality and understanding. The interviewer is well aware that it is not always possible in pastoral visitation to reach this kind of depth in discussion even when the situation seems favourable to consideration of the theme of 'the last things'.
in most cases only 5, answered affirmatively.

In Table 22, it is shown that more respondents indicate a fear of the process of dying for various reasons (to be discussed later in the Interpretation).

ELMS	Fear of death	5 (both sexes)
	Fear of process of dying	11 (both sexes)
WYLLERBURN	Fear of death	7 (both sexes)
	Fear of process of dying	11 (both sexes)
ABBEYFIELD	Fear of death	-
	Fear of process of dying	4 (female only)

This trend is more obvious in the figures for the domiciled elderly.

LONDON ROAD	Fear of death	5 (female only)
	Fear of process of dying	22 (both sexes)
OTHER CHURCHES	Fear of death	4 (both sexes)
	Fear of process of dying	21 (both sexes)
NON-MEMBERS	Fear of death	6 (female only)
	Fear of process of dying	19 (both sexes)

As far as the fear of the process of dying is concerned, the number of males who indicate such fear is 45% of the total male sample, and the same percentage is recorded for the female sample. Taking the

Analysis of the Answers with Tables of Results

(a) The different kinds of fear related to Aging and Death

The large majority of all respondents had no fear of getting old, and in the largest groups interviewed a maximum of only 6, but in most cases only 4, answered affirmatively.

Again the large majority of all respondents had no fear of death, and in the largest groups interviewed a maximum of only 7, but in most cases only 5, answered affirmatively.

In Table 22, it is shown that more respondents indicate a fear of the process of dying for various reasons (to be discussed later in the Interpretation).

ELMS	Fear of death	5 (both sexes)
	Fear of process of dying	11 (both sexes)
WEDDERBURN	Fear of death	7 (both sexes)
	Fear of process of dying	11 (both sexes)
ABBNEYFIELD	Fear of death	-
	Fear of process of dying	4 (female only)

This trend is more obvious in the figures for the domiciled elderly.

LONDON ROAD	Fear of death	5 (female only)
	Fear of process of dying	22 (both sexes)
OTHER CHURCHES	Fear of death	4 (both sexes)
	Fear of process of dying	21 (both sexes)
NON-MEMBERS	Fear of death	6 (female only)
	Fear of process of dying	19 (both sexes)

As far as the fear of the process of dying is concerned, the number of males who indicate such fear is 48% of the total male sample, and the same percentage is recorded for the female sample. Taking the

TABLE 22. Different types of Fear expressed by elderly residents in Institutions
(including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled.

Fear	ELMS		WEDDERBURN		ABBEYFIELD		LONDON RD.		OTHER CHURCHES		NON-MEMBERS	
	M(10)	F(20)	M(6)	F(21)	M(1)	F(8)	M(10)	F(30)	M(12)	F(35)	M(9)	F(22)
Aging	1	3	2	2		1	2	2		6	2	3
Death	2	3	1	6				5	1	3		6
Process of dying	4	7	3	8		4	6	16	5	16	5	14
Close to death	6	1	3				3		2	3	1	1
Other person's death		1				2	3	9		3	2	3

total for Instit.(Homes), 40% express fear of the process of dying, then for domiciled elderly church members it is 49%, and finally 61% of non-members. The number of those who remembered experiencing fear when they were close to death previously were mainly men who served in the 1st World War (15), and only 5 women recorded this answer. Those affected by some other persons death (excluding a death recorded in the crisis situations) totalled 23 cases, of which 12 were included in the answers from the domiciled elderly London Road membership.

(b) An estimate of belief in an After-life according to a 3-point scale

The great majority of all respondents expressed a strong belief in an After-life. For those in Instit.(Homes) it is 77% of the total; while domiciled elderly church members score 71%, and non-members 50%. A smaller number expressed a hope that it might be true while remaining unsure, but few recorded no belief (except non-members).

In Table 23 the figures are recorded of those who believe they will meet with loved ones in an After-life. If we take these figures as a percentage of those who had expressed a belief in an After-life, we find that the results are similar, namely for Instit.(Homes) 62%, domiciled elderly church members 60%, and non-members 60%.

TABLE 23. Different degrees of belief in an After-life, including reunion with loved ones, of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

	ELMS		WEDDERBURN		ABBEYFIELD		LONDON RD.		OTHER CHURCHES		NON-MEMBERS	
	M(10)	F(20)	M(6)	F(21)	M(1)	F(8)	M(10)	F(30)	M(12)	F(35)	M(9)	F(22)
<u>Belief in an After-life</u>												
Strong belief	5	16	4	19	1	6	7	20	9	26	3	12
Hopeful	3	4	1			2	1	6	2	8	2	7
None	2		1	2			2	4	1	1	4	3
<u>Belief in Reunion with Loved ones</u>												
Strong belief	2	12	4	8	1	5	1	16	3	17	2	7
Hopeful	2	1		1			1	4	1	6	1	3

(c) An estimate of belief in Judgment and Eternal Punishment according to a 3-point scale

In answer to the question regarding belief in a Judgment after death, those respondents in Instit.(Homes) who answered affirmatively constituted 42% of the total residents. For the domiciled elderly 47% of church members believed in a Judgment, but only 16% of non-members. In Instit.(Homes) 4 believed that judgment occurred in this life; and the corresponding figures for church members and non-members (domiciled elderly) were 13 and 1.

The number believing in Eternal Punishment dropped to a small level. The actual figure for Instit.(Homes) was 10 (of which 6 were recorded by Wedderburn members), and only 13 among the domiciled elderly church members with 1 non-member. The majority of answers were expressed in terms of a strong negative.

Assuming that most of the respondents who heard the emphatic preaching on the theme of Judgment and Eternal Punishment in their earlier years would be in the age-group of 75 years and over, the analysis was carried a stage further. In Table 25, the majority of those who answered with a clear affirmative regarding Judgment constituted a clear majority in the over 75 years group as far as Instit.(Homes) were concerned, namely 21 compared to 7 (under 75 years). In the domiciled elderly group of church members it is a small majority of 22 compared to 19, and similarly for non-members of 4 to 1. Taking it as a percentage of the total number in the age group of 75 years and over, then for Instit.(Homes) we find that 43% believe in a judgment. The corresponding percentages for the domiciled elderly are 47% for church members and 23% for non-members.

TABLE 24. Different degrees of belief in Judgment and Eternal Punishment of elderly residents in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

	ELMS		WEDDERBURN		ABBEYFIELD		LONDON RD.		OTHER CHURCHES		NON-MEMBERS	
	M(10)	F(20)	M(6)	F(21)	M(1)	F(8)	M(10)	F(30)	M(12)	F(35)	M(9)	F(22)
<u>Belief in Judgment</u>												
Strong belief	3	7	3	10	1	4	5	15	4	17	1	4
None	6	12	1	10		3	4	11	6	10	2	9
Uncertain	1	1	2	1		1	1	4	2	8	6	9
<u>Belief in Eternal Punishment</u>												
Strong belief			1	5		4	2	5		6	1	
None	9	20	4	13	1	4	8	21	10	20	2	11
Uncertain	1		1	3				4	2	9	6	11

TABLE 25. Comparison of the elderly over and under 75 years in their belief regarding Judgment and Eternal Punishment in Institutions (including the Abbeyfields) compared with those privately domiciled

	ELMS		WEDDERBURN		ABBEYFIELD		LONDON RD.		OTHER CHURCHES		NON-MEMBERS	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Total Sample	10	20	6	21	1	8	10	30	12	35	9	22
Those 75 yrs and over	10	19	4	12	-	4	5	13	7	21	7	10
<u>Belief in Judgment</u>												
Over 75 years	3	7	1	7		3	3	6	2	11	1	3
Under " "			2	3	1	1	2	9	2	6		1
<u>Belief in Et. Punishment</u>												
Over 75 years				2		3	2	2		5	1	
Under " "			1	3		1		3		1		

When we turn to belief in eternal punishment, the figures for the over 75 years group are exactly equal to the lower age-group for the Instit.(Homes). In the case of the domiciled elderly church members, 9 of 75 years or over made a clear affirmative compared to 4 under 75 years. The single case among non-members expressing this belief was over 75 years.

There was no significant difference recorded in the samples between the Homes or the domiciled elderly, or in the figures for church members compared with non-members. However non-members recorded a slightly higher percentage for fear of the process of dying compared with church members (including Homes and domiciled elderly). Yet it is significant that just under a half of church members do express this fear of the process of dying which is spread fairly evenly throughout the samples.

While the great majority of the respondents expressed the feeling that they had lived their lives to the allotted span or beyond it, then in that sense they were quite prepared to die. It is quite likely that people in middle-age have a greater fear of death, especially when they realise that it would cut short their lives at a critical point in their careers or when there are still outstanding family responsibilities to be fulfilled. The elderly have passed that stage; and if they feel they have lived their lives to the full then the prospect of death is not fearsome and could be welcomed, in some cases, with a sense of relief.

When the question is put in the form of the fear of the process of dying, then it brings up other considerations like the manner of dying or the repercussions on other people close to the respondent.

Interpretation of the Data according to the Sub-Hypotheses

(a) That elderly church members fear death, or the process of dying, less than non-members

Following an examination of the interview material and the analysis of the results, it was found that the great majority of respondents expressed no fear of death. There was no significant difference recorded in the samples between the Homes or the domiciled elderly, or in the figures for church members compared with non-members. However non-members recorded a slightly higher percentage for fear of the process of dying compared with church members (including Homes and domiciled elderly). Yet it is significant that just under a half of church members do express this fear of the process of dying which is spread fairly evenly throughout the samples.

While the great majority of the respondents expressed the feeling that they had lived their lives to the allotted span or beyond it, then in that sense they were quite prepared to die. It is quite likely that people in middle-age have a greater fear of death, especially when they realise that it would cut short their lives at a critical point in their careers or when there are still outstanding family responsibilities to be fulfilled. The elderly have passed that stage; and if they feel they have lived their lives to the full then the prospect of death is not fearsome and could be welcomed, in some cases, with a sense of relief.

When the question is put in the form of the fear of the process of dying, then it brings up other considerations like the manner of dying or the repercussions on other people close to the respondent.

It was obvious in the answers that this question had exercised the minds of many, and did in fact produce feelings of apprehension for the future and even fear. Many had a real fear of a painful or protracted period of suffering prior to death, and it followed in many cases from an experience of caring for a loved one through painful and distressing terminal illness. In the light of this, their fear was associated with the possibility that their suffering would mean that added burdens must be placed on the lives of those near to them. Then there were also cases of those who feared the prospect of death, because of the effect it would have on their partner who entirely depended upon their care in their disability and helplessness. So fear of the process of dying involved not only the prospect of dying a painful death, but the consequences that this would have for spouse and family. It was seen in the interview material that this kind of fear was a continuing worry for many of the respondents.

(b) That elderly church members believe in an After-life more than non-members

The great majority of church members believed in an After-life compared with non-members, although a half of the sample of non-members recorded this belief.

But it was found that not all those who expressed belief in an After-life also shared the conviction of their reunion with loved ones in a future life. But the actual percentages recorded, namely approx. 60%, for the various groups (Homes, domiciled elderly members and non-members) were almost equal.

In regard to belief in an After-life which is mentioned above, it should be added that only a very small number actually expressed a hope 'that this might be true' - except in the non-members sample. In fact amongst non-members less than a quarter recorded no belief at all in their answers. In Chapter 8 reference will be made to the results of other research where it was also found that the elderly had a strong belief in the After-life. The fact that non-members believed this to a remarkable extent must indicate that it is a matter of real concern for all the elderly. For the majority of the elderly it can be understood that the teaching of their youth remained with them to their later years, or became more clearly focussed in their minds as they approached the end of their lives.

It is an important finding in this research that strong belief in an After-life does not produce the same certainty that they will meet loved ones in a future existence. This may be because people's certainty in a future existence is not accompanied with clear understanding of what this life will be like. Certainly some of the answers were expressed in the context of Biblical allusion, but for many it was couched in vague terms of peace and bliss. For those who believed that they will meet with Christ, the Saviour and Lord, there was also the certainty that they will also be greeted by loved ones. But this kind of belief was a minority position. In the interview material we found that this belief of reunion was not only the product of faith and Christian belief, but also an indication of the deep satisfaction that was experienced in marriage and the very close links between a mother and her children. Obviously it was difficult for them to know what form the relationship would take in a future

existence, yet they sincerely believed that it must have some kind of fulfilment hereafter and could not be broken even by death. While one might have expected many to believe that judgment was effective

(c) That elderly church members believe in a Judgment beyond death and Eternal punishment which non-members do not believe

A large minority of church members believed in a Judgment after death (45%), while a large majority rejected the doctrine of Eternal Punishment (72%). Only 5 non-members believed in Judgment, and this was reduced to 1 as far as Eternal punishment was concerned.

Where the analysis divided the samples into those over and those under 75 years, we find that a clear majority of those expressing a belief in Judgment are found in the over-75 years group of the Homes sample; but this is only a slight majority in the over-75 years group in the domiciled elderly sample. In the case of the non-members a clear majority is found in the over-75 years group, but this is hardly significant because the numbers are small. No significant conclusions can be drawn regarding Eternal punishment because the number expressing this belief is so small.

It is interesting that the number answering "not sure" to both questions (Judgment and Eternal punishment) was only high in the case of non-members, and about a half gave this non-committal answer. The conclusion that could be drawn is that either they had never given the question any thought, or having considered it disbelief was balanced by some lingering remnant of the old teaching. Many felt that the condition of the world demanded some form of judgment, but not so many had a scriptural warrant for their views. The majority

who believed in judgment understood that the question referred to their own lives, and they were prepared to face God's verdict. While one might have expected many to believe that judgment was effective in the events of this life, only 18 of the whole sample answered accordingly. ¹¹ (74%) compared with non-members, although it is significant. For some the question of judgment must have been closely associated with eternal punishment so that belief in one implied acceptance of the other. Even if that was true, the idea of eternal punishment was repugnant to the very large majority, and only 23 of the total respondents (with the addition of 1 non-member) believed in it. It was significant that the majority had reacted strongly against this doctrine from their earlier days, which would have surprised the preachers of a former generation if they had only known. For the respondents, who expressed themselves very strongly in their answers, the doctrine was contrary to their basic understanding of God as a merciful and loving Father and Jesus Christ as Saviour and Friend. Again very few mentioned the possibility of people experiencing a state of hell in this life, which suggested that for the majority of the respondents the idea of hell was anathema to them not only in the consideration of the future life but in this life also.

Summary

Again the interpretation of the data was presented in relation to the sub-hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the study. It was shown that the great majority of respondents expressed no fear of death. There was no significant difference between the Institutions and the domiciled elderly, or in the figures for church members

compared with non-members. Non-members did record a slightly higher percentage for fear of the process of dying compared with church members, yet just under a half of church members expressed this same fear also. The great majority of church members believed in an After-life (74%) compared with non-members, although it is significant that a half of the non-member's sample also believed. But it was also found that of those who expressed belief in an After-life, approximately 60% of all the groups (Institutions, domiciled elderly members, and non-members) shared the conviction of reunion with loved ones in a future life. If a large minority of church members (45%) believed in a Judgment after death, than a large majority (72%) rejected Eternal Punishment. The number of non-members who believed in Judgment came to 16% of the sample, and only one male elderly recorded a belief in Eternal Punishment.

In the next chapter we proceed to the conclusions - consideration of the main hypotheses and whether they are supported or not by the evidence, and also the final recommendations.

programme has been outlined in Chapter 1. It is hoped that these interview examples will give a fuller data presentation, even though the answers are necessarily restricted, in certain places, to what is strictly relevant and of value.

The six examples are taken from the Elms, Wedderburn, London Road and Other Churches, and finally a non-member. The names are omitted in the interests of confidentiality.

APPENDIX: SIX EXAMPLES OF THE COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE FOLLOWING
THE INTERVIEW

The writer has included six examples of the Interviews as a necessary supplement to the descriptive material which is included in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. It is obvious that the quality of the answers varies considerably from interview to interview, and also it should be noted that the inclusion of verbatim extracts points to the most valuable and relevant material given in the answers. It emphasises further the attempt to promote answers 'in depth', and while encouraging the interviewee to speak freely it was accepted that not all the remarks made would be strictly relevant or to the point.

The six examples cover the variables of male and female elderly, those living in Institutions and those domiciled privately, and the further categories of church member and non-member. While it is impossible to estimate the time taken during interviews from a perusal of the examples given, the time schedule for the interview programme has been outlined in Chapter 1. It is hoped that these interview examples will give a fuller data presentation, even though the answers are necessarily restricted, in certain places, to what is strictly relevant and of value.

The six examples are taken from the Elms, Wedderburn, London Road and Other Churches, and finally a non-member. The names are omitted in the interests of confidentiality.

ELMS (F)NAMESEX - FemaleAGE - 83SINGLE

CHILDREN - 2 (f)

OCCUPATION~~MARRIED~~

GRANDCHILDREN - 1

Doctor (medical missionary)

WIDOW

Husband: minister of religion
(missionary)DATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOOD

NO. OF YEARS AT ELMS: 2

1953

SECTION A

Q. How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

A. As she suffers from arthritis it is only possible for her to attend Church when taken by car. She attends on average twice a month, and also attends the weekly service in the Elms on Thursday evening. As a medical missionary she has always been regular in church attendance in the past.

Q. Do members of your family go to Church?

A. Children: 2 (one daughter died aged 4 years) - YES

Grandchildren: 1 - YES

Q. What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in (or have you joined)?

A. As a medical missionary she had a wide range of church activities including the conduct of services, prayer groups, and church meetings in the Mission Church. As a minister's wife in Scotland this was followed by presiding over the Woman's Guild and other meetings.

Q. What do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. Missionary activities.

Q. How regularly do you say prayers?

A. Daily. "I still pray daily but I find it more difficult now than before. I think it meant more to me when I was working as a missionary doctor."

Q. Do you read the Bible?

A. Daily. "It has always been my practice to use a Bible aid like Daily Light (selected verses of scripture under a daily theme)."

Q. Do you listen to or view religious programmes on Radio?

A. YES, but only occasionally (difficulty with hearing)

1) T.V.? NO

Q. Do you have regular visits from family or friends?

A. Only occasional visits from married daughter, but regular visits from friends.

Q. Does this include young people?

A. Just occasional, except when parties of young people visit the Elms.

Q. Do you have friends in other denominations (including Roman Catholics)?

A. YES, from missionary days.

"As a missionary I had many friends from different Churches.

My daughter married a Roman Catholic and I have always had a good relationship with him."

She added that she had a very high regard for certain Hindu and Moslem friends in India who were very kind to her children.

Q. Do members of the Church visit you?

A. YES regularly.

Q. Do you think the Church could do more for Old People?

A. She replied that few people come to visit old people, and she felt that they would welcome more regular visitation from Church members.

Q. Do you feel more contented as you grow older?

A. "As I get older I have a deeper feeling of thankfulness for I have been well-looked after all my years."

Q. Do you feel cut off from the society around you?

A. NO.

SECTION B

Try to identify a crisis situation when support was necessary.

1) Nature of the crisis. Death of her small daughter aged 4 years in India.

2) Time 1922

3) Reaction at the time "I remember at the time I thought it was dreadful that God could allow this to happen. Especially that it happened to my first-born. I am sure I was very bitter about it and my faith was severely tried."

Q. Can you remember who gave you the greatest support?

A. Her husband was the greatest support.

A. "He continually assured me that some day we will understand why it happened. I suppose I held on to this assurance but it was very difficult for me."

Q. In what way, if any, did the Church help?

A. Missionary friends and members of the Mission Church were a great help through their sympathy and support.

Q. How did you adjust to the new situation?

A. She explained how her medical work helped in this respect.

"It must have been easier for me to adjust compared with other people because I had so many cases to attend to in the hospital.

I was very busy and this certainly helped me, but it took a

long time before I came to accept her loss."

She then went on to speak about her husband's death (1953) which she experienced as a different kind of crisis. She expressed her feeling in this way:

"It was bad enough to lose a husband who was a wonderful partner through life, but it was more than this, for the people of his congregation loved him dearly and they lost a good pastor and friend."

She well remembered the support she received from 2 friends, after she left the Manse, who were not church members. She also gained great comfort and support from a ministerial friend of her husband who had visited him in hospital during his illness, and later came to see her on a number of occasions.

Q. Did you find retirement difficult to accept? or, in the case of widows, how did their husbands react?

A. Her husband died before retirement when serving a congregation in Sutherland.
She personally found it difficult to retire from her medical work.

SECTION C.

- Q. Do you fear getting old? YES - Male AGE - 75
- A. NO. CHILDREN } N/A OCCUPATION - Civil Servant
GRANDCHILDREN } (Island Revenue)
- Q. Do you fear death? NO.
- or the process of dying? YES. No. of Years at WEDDERBURN - 2
- A. "I cannot remember a time that I ever feared death. But I
do fear awful suffering. From all that I know of elderly
people I believe this is their attitude too." compare with
- Q. Have you ever been close to death? and were you afraid at the time?
- A. NO. attender. He attended Church at Newbottle when young (in
- Q. Have you ever been affected by some other person's death (not
involved in the crisis situation)? did not consider himself
- A. YES. In the case of her husband (see above). ended the short Sunday
- Q. Do you believe in an After-life? YES. of his stay there, but he
- A. YES. "I know that I am going to Christ."
- Q. Do you expect to be reunited with dear ones?
- A. "I think so." N/A
- Q. Do you believe in Judgment (at the end of our life on earth)?
- A. YES. Kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in
- Q. Does this mean some form of eternal punishment?
- A. NO. "I cannot accept the Church's teaching on Hell. We will
be punished in some way in the judgment, but I believe that
Christ will get all people to come to Him in the end."
- Q. How regularly do you say prayers?
- A. Very rarely. He said he would pray if in some special need, and
he had confidence in prayer as he believed that some power guides
us through life.

WEDDERBURN (M)NAMESEX - MaleAGE - 75

SINGLE

CHILDREN }

~~MARRIED~~

N/A

OCCUPATION - Civil Servant
(Inland Revenue)~~WIDOW~~

GRANDCHILDREN }

DATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOODNo. of Years at WEDDERBURN - 2

1960

T.V.? NO

SECTION A

Q. How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

A. Non-attender. He attended Church at Newbattle when young (in company of his mother), but no record of church attendance from that time. He emphasised that he did not consider himself irreligious. He went on to say that he attended the short Sunday service at Wedderburn at the beginning of his stay there, but he does not attend now.

Q. Do members of your family go to Church?

Children:

N/A

Grandchildren:

Q. What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in (or have you joined)?

A. NIL.

Q. Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. NIL.

Q. How regularly do you say prayers?

A. Very rarely. He said he would pray if in some special need, and he had confidence in prayer as he believed that some power guides us through life.

- Q. Do you read the Bible?
- A. He remembered that at one point of his life he read quite a lot (when he was very much younger), but it seemed a very long time since he last referred to it.
- Q. Do you listen to or view religious programmes on Radio NO
T.V.? NO
- A. He mentioned that he did watch religious television at home, but had not done so since being at Wedderburn.
- Q. Do you have regular visits from family or friends? NO.
Does this include young people? NO.
- A. He added that he thought young people were far more considerate for others than previous generations. He ended with the words,
"But I reckon they are not religious."
- Q. Do you have friends in other denominations (including Roman Catholics)? NO.
- A. He voiced suspicions about the designs of the Roman Catholic Church. He was bitterly antagonistic towards the Plymouth Brethren which went back to an experience when a relation refused to sit at the same table with him for a meal.
- Q. Do members of the Church visit you?
- A. NO.
- Q. Do you think the Church could do more for Old People?
- A. "It isn't so interested in their ordinary welfare. Beyond the spiritual sphere the Church doesn't seem to be really interested. From observation I guess that the Church doesn't visit the old as much today. I think it could help more in this."
- A. There was very little support. He explained that at this time his Mother's minister was away and another took his place. He

- Q. Do you feel more contented as you grow older?
- A. NO. "I do not feel more contented spiritually. Still I reckon I have the strength of character to carry on all right."
- Q. Do you feel cut off from the society around you?
- A. YES. it was hardly successful. He missed his mother very much and no one could
-

SECTION B.

Try to identify a crisis situation when support was necessary.

- 1) Nature of the crisis Death of his mother
- 2) Time 1959
- 3) Reaction at the time He described how this meant that he lost his home and his best friend.

"It was more difficult when I had to go away. I lost my grip of things when I had to go to 'digs' after her death.

She did so much for me that I was really lost when she died."

SECTION C.

In the early stages he found it very difficult to manage for himself, and it was complicated because he is the kind of person who does not make friends easily.

- Q. Do you fear getting old?
- A. NO.
- Q. Do you fear death?
- A. NO.
- Q. Can you remember who gave you the greatest support?
- A. No support mentioned, and he said that he had to rely on himself entirely.
- Q. In what way, if any, did the Church help?
- A. There was very little support. He explained that at this time his Mother's minister was away and another took his place. He

missed him very much for he had been a very good friend of the family for many years.

Q. How did you adjust to the new situation?

A. He explained that he managed to adjust in time but had to admit that it was hardly successful. He missed his mother very much and no-one could take her place.

Q. Did you find retirement difficult to accept? or, in the case of widows, how did their husbands react?

A. "I didn't need to retire in 1960. I remember at the time that the pressure of work was very trying for me (P.A.Y.E. regulations and administration). I decided to retire, and I suppose I was still very upset owing to my mother's death."

A. He added that after a few years he regretted this decision and wished that he had continued working. He felt better, physically and mentally, than when he retired.

Although he went on to say.

"I sometimes think there should be one!"

SECTION C.

Q. Do you fear getting old?

A. NO.

Q. Do you fear death?

A. NO.

Q. Or the process of dying?

A. YES. "I have a fear of losing my faculties, particularly my sight. I couldn't bear the prospect of lying upstairs like some of the folk there (referring to the geriatric wards upstairs above the Home). I realise now that I much prefer

LOWE a home of my own, and I'd rather die in my own home when the time comes." AGE - 92

Q. Have you ever been close to death? and were you afraid at the time?

A. NO.

Q. Have you ever been affected by some other person's death (not involved in the crisis situation)?

A. NO.

Q. Do you believe in an After-life?

A. Yes. He had always taken this for granted.

A. "I am sure that after death you are not finished for there must

Q. be something else to follow."

Q. Do you expect to be reunited with dear ones?

A. "I am sure I will meet my Mother again."

Q. Do you believe in Judgment (at the end of our life on earth)?

A. NO. He thought of Judgment as something happening in this life.

A. Although he went on to say.

Q. "I sometimes think there should be one!"

Q. Does this mean some form of eternal punishment?

A. Definitely not.

A. Every night. But he explained that it was not always like that during his life, for at some periods it was only occasional.

[He described a definite prayer outline that he follows each night.

A. "I pray nightly

1. for health and a quiet, peaceful death when my turn comes.

A. I add the prayer that in the closing chapters I shall not be a burden on those who have looked after me so long.

LONDON ROAD (M)LIVING WITH OTHERSNAMESEX - MaleAGE - 92SINGLECHILDREN - 3 (f)OCCUPATION - Manager of the SCWSMARRIEDGRANDCHILDREN - 3

Wholesale Dept. (Edinburgh)

WIDOWERDATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOOD

1945

1958

SECTION A.

Q. How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

A. Regular attender as previously.

Q. Do members of your family go to Church?

A. Children - Members of the Church but not regular.

Q. Grandchildren - NO.

Q. What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in (or have you joined)?

A. A Manager and an Elder.

Q. Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. Membership of the Kirk Session.

Q. How regularly do you say prayers?

A. Every night. But he explained that it was not always like that during his life, for at some periods it was only occasional.

Q. [He described a definite prayer outline that he follows each night.

A. NO. "I pray nightly

Q. Do 1. for health and a quiet, peaceful death when my turn comes.

A. YES. I add the prayer that in the closing chapters I shall not be a burden on those who have looked after me so long.

2. for family members.

3. for peace in the world, and I always finish with 'Thy Kingdom come on earth'. I feel if we all prayed this as a Christian community it would make a change in troubled places."]

Q. Do you read the Bible?

A. Just occasionally - hardly every week. But he read certain favourite passages when he felt the need.

Q. Do you listen to or view Radio/T.V. religious programmes?

A. RADIO - No.

T.V. - YES. discussion programmes, Prof. Wm. Barclay talks, and particularly Songs of Praise.

Q. Do you have regular visits from family or friends?

A. YES. every week.

Q. Does this include young people?

A. YES.

Q. Do you have friends in other denominations (including Roman Catholics)?

A. YES.

Q. Do members of the Church visit you?

A. YES. occasionally (this meant every month).

Q. Do you think the Church could do more for Old People?

A. NO.

Q. Do you feel more contented as you grow older?

A. YES. "As you get older you have no great ambitions to fulfil.

You are more satisfied with the simple things in life."

Q. Do you feel cut off from the society around you?

A. NO.

SECTION B.

Try to identify a crisis situation when support was necessary.

1) Nature of the crisis His youngest daughter's death at 46 years

2) Time 1966

3) Reaction at the time "I can remember that it came as a great shock to me because she was always so full of life. She was a lovely personality and she was full of enthusiasm for everything she did. When I knew that she was dying of cancer I couldn't believe that it would happen to her."

Q. Can you remember who gave you the greatest support?

A. His daughters and, in particular, the daughter and son-in-law with whom he lived. He remembered that he came closer to his son-in-law (whose wife died) after their mutual loss.

Q. In what way, if any, did the Church help?

A. Particularly at the Funeral Service which helped him to face the future with calm and strengthened faith.

Q. How did you adjust to the new situation?

A. "The important thing was that I kept my faith although sorely tried. As I think about it I realise that I learned something more about life through this experience. I know that life is made up of such experiences which we must learn to accept, but

A. NO.

Q. Then I felt that God had something to teach me through her death."

A. He then went on to quote something he had read in one of Prof. W. Barclay's books: "Man only grows up when he experiences some great sorrow." He expressed the feeling that he had learned more about faith and life in this experience than anything else he had suffered during his life.

Q. Did you find retirement difficult to accept? or, in the case of widows, how did their husbands react?

A. NO. "I found that I had a new-found freedom from the routine of ordinary work. I was lucky that I could take up certain special interests after my retirement."

A. In particular he very much enjoyed the work he did in connection with Huts and Canteens for the Church of Scotland and also his Masonic duties.

SECTION C.

Q. Do you fear getting old?

A. NO. "...but I pray each night not to become a burden to my family."

Q. Do you fear death? NO.

or the process of dying?

"Not really, except I do have a fear of going to hospital and dying there."

He explained that he had never been in hospital during his life.

Q. Have you ever been close to death? and were you afraid at the time?

A. NO.

Q. Have you ever been affected by some other person's death (except Section B)?

A. YES, especially when he was involved in the nursing of his wife during her terminal illness. The memory of his Father's death (1913) and Grandfather's death (1892) did not register as something frightening or upsetting.

Q. Do you believe in an After-life? and, if so, does this include reunion with dear ones?

A. YES. "I expect some wonderful experience beyond death. I think of it as a great adventure but I am not clear what form it will take. I just feel there must be some fulfilment of life here on earth. I am sure I will meet my dear ones there."

Q. Do you believe in Judgment after our life on earth?

A. NO.

Q. Does this mean some form of eternal punishment?

A. NO. "I consider eternal punishment to be an impossible doctrine."

Q. Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. The Girls' Association.

Q. How regularly do you say prayers?

A. YES. Each night. "I get great comfort from my prayers. It is like lifting a load off my back when I voice my troubles to God."

Q. Do you read the Bible?

A. NO. "But if some passage came up at a meeting and I found it helpful, then I would read it again before going to bed."

Q. Do you listen to or view Radio/T.V. religious programmes?

A. YES in both cases.

LONDON ROAD (F)LIVING WITH OTHERSNAMESEX - FemaleAGE - 69SINGLECHILDREN - 2(f)OCCUPATIONMARRIEDGRANDCHILDREN -

Husband: Printer

WIDOWDATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOOD

- 1936

SECTION A

Q. How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

A. Regular, as previously.

Q. Do members of your family go to Church?

A. Children - 2 (unmarried). YES Regular

Grandchildren - nil.

Q. What kind of Church activities do you (or have you) participate in (or have you joined)?

A. In former years the Girls' Association and the Woman's Guild.

Q. Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. The Girls' Association.

Q. How regularly do you say prayers?

A. YES. Each night. "I get great comfort from my prayers.

It is like lifting a load off my back when I voice my troubles to God."

Q. Do you read the Bible?

A. NO. "But if some passage came up at a meeting and I found it helpful, then I would read it again before going to bed."

Q. Do you listen to or view Radio/T.V. religious programmes?

A. YES in both cases.

Q. Do you have regular visits from family or friends?

A. YES, although she lives with her 2 unmarried daughters there are other relations who live quite near.

Q. Does this include young people?

A. Within the family and near relations only very occasionally (from England).

Q. Do you have friends in other denominations (including Roman Catholics)?

A. YES.

Q. Do members of the Church visit you?

A. YES, very regularly.

Q. Do you think the Church could do more for Old People?

A. NO. "I think they do quite a lot which is not always appreciated."

Q. Do you feel more contented as you grow older?

A. YES. "I don't worry about the things that once upset me. I sometimes wish I wasn't growing older because I have a peace of mind I never had when younger."

She then quoted her late husband's favourite text (Romans ch.8:28) which had been an inspiration for her.

"I have come to believe that 'all things work together for good', and I have followed his words, 'Believe in yourself and do what you think is right' more successfully in later years. You know, I am more prepared now to go to a person and try to settle a misunderstanding than ever I was before."

[She also spoke about her Mother's favourite saying, "When one door shuts another is sure to open." She remembered that she was only 7 years old when her Father died, and her Mother was left with the

care of 4 children. "She never lost her faith and I have never forgotten her example. I think I share some of her calm and peace as I get older."]

Q. Do you feel cut off from the society around you?

A. NO.

SECTION B

Try to identify a crisis situation when support was necessary.

- 1) Nature of the crisis Death of her husband
- 2) Time 1936
- 3) Reaction at the time "I was very bitter at the time. Because his death was so sudden it came as a great shock and I couldn't understand why he was taken away from me like that. I found that the greatest difficulty was meeting other people after his death."

Q. Can you remember who gave you the greatest support?

A. She was well-supported by her family, in particular her in-laws.

Q. In what way, if any, did the Church help?

A. She found that the support from her Minister was very good and members of the Church were helpful. Her minister was particularly good in encouraging her to meet people.

"I remember that he always said, 'You will find that you are not alone in misfortune', and that proved true in my experience afterwards."

Q. How did you adjust to the new situation?

A. She replied that she eventually overcame her bitterness by being increasingly concerned in the care and attention necessary in the upbringing of her retarded daughter.

"I remember that my sister-in-law always told me that M... added, was sent for a purpose, and that came true." I have had a very good friend took her out, with her children, each day so that she would meet other people and get over her enforced isolation. She went on to say that later she had the feeling that she was almost relieved to have got over the experience of adapting herself to the loss of her husband.

"It is a curious thing but I had a feeling of actual relief that I had come to terms with my husband's death. I realised that for many it had still to come...but because I had experienced it I realised that I could help others when they were in trouble."

She then mentioned that a number of married women had spoken to her on this question of how to cope with the loss of someone they loved, and she added,

"I know it is an ever-present anxiety for some of them."

Q. Did you find retirement difficult to accept? or, in the case of widows, how did their husbands react?

A. Her husband died before retirement.

...life on earth?)
...according to the
...we have all sinned

SECTION C

Q. Do you fear getting old?

A. NO.

Q. Do you fear death? or the process of dying?

A. NO. "I don't think about it. I will be prepared for it." She added, "I didn't use to think about it, but recently I have had a fear of lying helpless for a long time as an invalid. I can't bear the thought of being a burden to others if I was like that."

Q. Have you ever been close to death? and were you afraid at the time?

A. NO.

Q. Have you ever been affected by some other person's death?

A. YES, by her Mother's death.

Q. Do you believe in an After-life? and, if so, does this include reunion with dear ones?

A. "I hope so. I try to believe in it but it still puzzles me. I think to myself what is the point of being good in this life if there is no heaven. I suppose that I have a deep feeling inside that there must be some kind of heaven for us when we die. And I have a hope that it will mean re-union with my husband. He believed in it, and I always remember his faith in the words of Romans ch.8:28." (previously quoted).

Q. Do you believe in Judgment (at the end of our life on earth)?

A. YES. "I believe all will be judged, but judged according to the special circumstances of their lives - for we have all sinned

and are far from perfect. I feel that some folk have not had an easy life, and it must have been more difficult for them. I am sure God will be merciful in the end."

Q. Does this mean some form of eternal punishment?

A. NO. "Definitely not. I don't believe in hell!"

DATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOOD

husband - 1967 1968

SECTION A

Q. How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

A. "I go once a month and most communions."

She explained that she has to care for an invalid sister each day and visits every morning.

"To be honest I have reached the stage where I look forward to a rest on Sundays."

Previously a very regular attender.

Q. Do members of your family go to Church?

A. Children: 3 - YES (son, a Merchant Navy Captain attends on leave)

Grandchildren: 3 - YES

Q. What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in

(or have you joined)?

A. "I don't attend church organisations now, but I did so in past years like the Guild and Work Party."

Q. Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. W. Guild.

OTHER CHURCHES (F)

(Old Restalrig)

LIVING WITH OTHERSNAMESEX - FemaleAGE - 64SINGLECHILDREN - 3(1m, 2f)OCCUPATIONMARRIEDGRANDCHILDREN - 3husband: Civil Servant in the
Estate Office.WIDOW

died aged 66 years.

DATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOOD

husband - 1967

1968

SECTION A

Q. How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with

Q. past years?

A. YES "I go once a month and most communions."

She explained that she has to care for an invalid sister each

Q. day and visits every morning.

A. YES "To be honest I have reached the stage where I look forward to

Q. a rest on Sundays."

Previously a very regular attender.

Q. Do members of your family go to Church?

A. Do Children: 3 - YES (son, a Merchant Navy Captain attends on leave)

A. Grandchildren: 3 - YES

Q. What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in

A. (or have you joined)?

A. "I don't attend church organisations now, but I did so in past
years like the Guild and Work Party."

Q. Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. W. Guild.

Q. How regularly do you say prayers?

A. Each day, morning and evening.

Q. Do you read the Bible?

A. YES, daily. She also said that her husband read his Bible daily (one chapter each night) and like herself was the product of a strict upbringing.

Q. Do you listen to or view religious programmes on Radio/T.V.

A. Radio - YES.

T.V. - YES, with particular preference for Worship services and Songs of Praise.

Q. Do you have regular visits from family or friends?

A. YES, married daughter visits every week. Daughter-in-law visits occasionally (monthly or less).

Q. Does this include young people?

A. YES, grandchildren visit occasionally (monthly or less).

Q. Do you have friends in other denominations (including Roman Catholics)?

A. YES.

Q. Do members of the Church visit you?

A. NO, although the Elder makes a quarterly visit before Communion.

Q. Do you think the Church could do more for Old People?

A. "I think the Church does a lot for Old People, but I believe that the Church's duty is only to the old who are sick or shut-in."

Q. Do you feel more contented as you grow older?

A. "I feel contented but not more so."

Q. Do you feel cut off from the society around you?

A. NO.

SECTION B

Try to identify a crisis situation when support was necessary.

1) Nature of the crisis The death of her husband. For a number of years he suffered from heart trouble and nervous debility (which caused an early retirement).

2) Time 1968

3) Reaction at the time "At the time I felt bitter that one who had done so much good in his life should finish up like that."

She referred to his service for the Church as an Elder and also work in the Sunday School and youth organisations. The nervous debility had reduced him to a shadow of his former self and curtailed all these activities.

Then she spoke about his experience in hospital where lack of proper care led to bed sores after only a short time there.

She had felt very annoyed that he had suffered in this way at the end of his life. She remembered that her husband's death brought back similar feelings that

she experienced when her parents died. Her father died after a painful illness of over 2 years, and her mother died a few months after his death being exhausted after the special exertions of caring for her husband.

"I never stopped praying with bitterness. Why I did not I can think of was that I would be shown. This made me more tolerant to people when I came to care for my husband who died of cancer."

Q. Did you find retirement difficult? But the worst moment for her came when her husband was in hospital.

A. Her husband had little retirement. "My faith was shaken when my husband he could hardly be said to have cried to God to take him away as he had no longer any wish to live. I never imagined that he would ever be reduced to that!"

SECTION C

Q. Do you fear getting old?

Q. Can you remember who gave you the greatest support?

A. Members of her family, particularly her daughters.

Q. In what way, if any, did the Church help?

A. The Minister and one or two members visited regularly during her bereavement.

Q. How did you adjust to the new situation?

A. "I had an unmarried daughter to look after in the house and so I was not alone. My time was fully occupied because I had an invalid sister to care for as well."

She had tried to face up to things realistically and get on with the things that had to be done. But there was an important aspect of the question still to be resolved.

"I never stopped praying during this period of doubt and bitterness. Why I did it I'm not sure, and the only thing I can think of was that I hoped that some kind of purpose would be shown. This came to me afterwards for I found I was more tolerant to people who were ill, and this was very true when I came to care for my sister (another sister) who later died of cancer."

- Q. Did you find retirement difficult to accept? or, in the case of widows, how did their husbands react?
- A. Her husband had little retirement and was in such poor health he could hardly be said to have enjoyed it.

SECTION C

- Q. Do you fear getting old?
- A. NO.
- Q. Do you fear death?
- A. NO.
- Q. Or the process of dying?
- A. YES. She expressed fear of a long period of suffering before death.

"I would like to go quickly and not be a burden to my family."
 [She raised the question of whether or not to tell the dying the truth of their condition. She remembered that her husband once asked her in hospital 'how long'. She knew exactly what he was

asking her, but passed it off with some reference to the duration of the visiting hour. She realized that she had not the courage at the time to take the opportunity presented which would have made the last weeks a time of mutual understanding and deeper communion. It was not long afterwards that her cousin, a Minister, died; and his wife told her that, although they both knew that he was dying, they never had the courage to confide in each other. As a result of these experiences, the respondent decided to give instructions to her Minister and doctor that they should inform her of the truth of the situation if it should arise in her case in a similar way. She wanted to be in a position where she could make adequate preparation for death, and be joined with her family in an atmosphere of truthfulness and concord.

After this she referred to an article in the British Weekly of August 27, 1970, entitled, "Yes, we ought to prepare for dying" which had greatly influenced her and remained in her private papers.]

Q. Have you ever been close to death? and were you afraid at the time?

A. NO.

Q. Have you ever been affected by some other person's death (not involved in the crisis situation)?

A. YES. There is reference to her parents and a sister who died of cancer in the recorded history (above).

Q. Do you believe in an After-life?

A. YES.

Q. Do you expect to be reunited with dear ones?

A. YES. "I have always had this belief throughout my life, and I strongly believe I will meet my dear ones again."

Q. Do you believe in Judgment (at the end of our life on earth)?

A. NO. "I believe that judgment takes place in this life on earth."

Q. Does this mean some form of eternal punishment?

A. NO. "I believe in punishment but it is in this life for our sins. In some way or another we suffer for our sins in our life-time."

SECTION A

Q. How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

A. Non-attender.

Q. Do members of your family go to Church?

Children -

Grandchildren -

A. N/A.

Q. What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in (or have you joined)?

A. She has attended the Sisterhood meeting at London Road, which is held in the afternoon and open to all women of the district.

Q. Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. She still enjoys the above.

Q. How regularly do you say prayers?

A. "Only occasionally, when I have something special to pray for." She agreed this would come in the category of weekly or less.

Q. Do you read the Bible?

A. NO.

NON-MEMBER (F)LIVING ALONENAMESEX - FemaleAGE - 71SINGLECHILDREN - NilOCCUPATIONMARRIEDGrandchildren - NilHusband: garage attendant and handyman.WIDOW

Retired 3 years and worked part-time.

wife: Shop assistant 27 yrs.DATE OF RETIREMENT/WIDOWHOOD

1968

1971

SECTION A

Q. How often do you go to Church, and how does this compare with past years?

A. Non-attender.

Q. Do members of your family go to Church?

A. Children -

Grandchildren -

A. N/A.

Q. What kind of church activities do you (or have you) participate in (or have you joined)?

A. She has attended the Sisterhood meeting at London Road, which is held in the afternoon and open to all women of the district.

Q. Which do you (or did you) enjoy most?

A. She still enjoys the above.

Q. How regularly do you say prayers?

A. "Only occasionally, when I have something special to pray for." She agreed this would come in the category of monthly or less.

Q. Do you read the Bible?

A. NO.

Q. Do you listen to or view Radio/T.V. religious programmes?

A. As she is partially blind (for 3 years) she can only listen to the Radio. She enjoys the religious programmes, in particular Hymn singing.

Q. Do you have regular visits from family or friends?

A. Her sister living in Sevenoaks visits, on average, 3 times a year. She has many friends in the district who visit her regularly (every week), and good neighbours help with her shopping.

Q. Does this include young people?

A. NO.

Q. Do you have friends in other denominations (including Roman Catholics)?

A. YES.

Q. Do members of the Church visit you?

A. "Members of the Sisterhood (who are actually members of the Church) are among the friends who visit me regularly."

Q. Do you think the Church could do more for Old People?

A. "I am not sure. I don't think so."

Q. Do you feel more contented as you grow older?

A. "Not more so because I always feel contented and happy with what I have got."

She then spoke about her love for the country (she was brought up as a girl in Kent) and described a recent bus excursion.

"My sight is poor, but I could just make out the outline of the trees from the bus. I did enjoy it, and I feel that God is so good to us in nature even though I can't see it very well."

Q. And do you feel cut off from the society around you? You see I

A. NO. knew how she felt."

She wasn't actually sure if this had helped her condition. Then she went on to say, "I must carry on."

SECTION B

Try to identify a crisis situation when support was necessary.

1) Nature of the crisis The death of her husband

2) Time 1971

3) Reaction at the time "It was so sudden. I remember he was standing beside me one minute and then the next he was away. But he did say that he thought he wouldn't be with me for long. He must have mentioned it 2 or 3 times as I remember. The shock is terrible, and I didn't seem able to do a thing. Thank goodness I had some good friends to pull me through."

SECTION C

Q. Do you fear getting old?

A. NO.

Q. Do you fear death?

A. NO.

Q. Can you remember who gave you the greatest support?

A. "I am sure it was my sister, but my friends were marvellous all the time."

Q. In what way, if any, did the Church help?

A. The Minister visited and proved helpful. (Also the friends referred to above).

Q. How did you adjust to the new situation?

A. "It has been difficult for me. I must say I felt it more this year (i.e. the second year) than last. A good friend in the stair lost her husband 2 months after mine, and she always said

- Q. that she got a lot of help when I was with her. You see I knew how she felt."
- A. She wasn't actually sure if this had helped her condition. Then she went on to say,
- A. "I miss him all the time, but I must carry on. That is the only thing you can do."
- Q. Did you find retirement difficult to accept? or, in the case of widows, how did their husbands react?
- A. "It was difficult for him until he got a part-time job in another garage when Munro's closed down."
- A. "I don't know," _____

SECTION C

- Q. Do you fear getting old?
- A. NO.
- Q. Do you fear death?
- A. NO.
- Q. Or the process of dying?
- A. YES. "Some people I know do fear death. But I only fear a long illness when I would be a trouble to others."
- She added,
- "In many ways I am thankful my husband went so quickly because I know he wasn't the type to stand a long illness and pain very well."
- Q. Have you ever been close to death? and were you afraid at the time?
- A. NO.

Q. Have you ever been affected by some other person's death (not involved in the crisis situation)?

A. No.

Q. Do you believe in an After-life? Hypotheses

A. In "I don't know. I would like to think so." ation of the main

Q. Do you expect to be reunited with dear ones? if they are supported

A. not "I don't know. I would like to think so." is presented in the

Q. Do you believe in Judgment (at the end of our life on earth)?

A. the "I don't know."

Q. Does this mean some form of eternal punishment?

(a) That people become more religious when they are elderly

A. "I don't know."

('religious' refers to church affiliation, attendance at worship,

participation in church activities, personal devotional life,

excepting those unable to attend Church or participate in activities
owing to infirmity.]

The conclusion from the research is that such people interviewed have maintained their religious affiliations, record of attendance at worship, participation in activities, and personal devotional life throughout their lives. Disengagement has come about largely because of infirmity and not by inclination. While the majority have maintained church attendance, on the basis of at least one attendance per month, only women have participated in church activities in considerable numbers. In the case of men these activities were largely occupied in office-bearer duties. A majority prayed daily, but the number of women making this regular devotion was higher than men. In the case of Bible-reading only a small minority practised this devotional exercise. Prayer was obviously the most

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions in the light of the main Hypotheses

In this concluding chapter we take up consideration of the main hypotheses of the study and examine them to see if they are supported or not by the evidence of the interviews. This is presented in the order of the three main hypotheses originally set out as the basis of the research study.

(a) That people become more religious when they are elderly

['religious' refers to church affiliation, attendance at worship, participation in church activities, personal devotional life, excepting those unable to attend Church or participate in activities owing to infirmity.]

The conclusion from the research is that such people interviewed have maintained their religious affiliations, record of attendance at worship, participation in activities, and personal devotional life throughout their lives. Disengagement has come about largely because of infirmity and not by inclination. While the majority have maintained church attendance, on the basis of at least one attendance per month, only women have participated in church activities in considerable numbers. In the case of men these activities were largely occupied in office-bearer duties. A majority prayed daily, but the number of women making this regular devotion was higher than men. In the case of Bible-reading only a small minority practised this devotional exercise. Prayer was obviously the most

important devotional practice for the respondents.

In order to enlarge on the general picture of their religious attitudes and connections, further sub-hypotheses were tested in respect of the influence of religious broadcasting, the frequency of visits (including the Church), and their general feeling of contentment or isolation. The majority of the elderly did listen to and view radio/television religious programmes, while the male element of the samples had a preference for television viewing, including religious programmes. Church visitation, on a regular and occasional basis, was well maintained in the case of the domiciled elderly, but this was not found to the same extent in the Homes. The Church Eventide Home had a great many contacts with different church organisations throughout the year, but the Local Authority Home had no such experience. The Abbeyfield experience was very similar to the domiciled elderly members. The majority of the sample expressed a feeling of contentment and lack of isolation in both the Homes and among those privately domiciled. Under half recorded a feeling of 'more contentment', but the combined figures for 'more contentment' and 'the same' produced high scores for the domiciled elderly. In the latter there was a strong correlation between faith and life in the Church and feelings of contentment.

These conclusions are in general accord with the results of research included in Chapter 2. There it was concluded that the evidence does not support the hypothesis that there is a great turning to religion or religious practices when people get old, or that we find disengagement from and reengagement with religious practices.

in later years. The same is true of the findings for personal devotion in prayer and Bible reading. With religious broadcasting the present research agrees with other surveys that 'Songs of Praise' is the most popular elderly persons' religious programme. But the picture of the real audience for religious television being mainly confined to the elderly female viewer, as mentioned in the Television Authority survey, is not in accordance with the results of the present research where more men were found to view religious television. Admittedly it is an open question whether this is to be defined as purposeful viewing.

It is obvious that the results of visitation by the Church in this research highlights a difference in the general situation in Scotland compared to England (making reference to the Townsend studies in Bethnal Green). It is probably true to say that the overall picture of church visitation is better in Scotland because a greater number of the elderly have a church connection. It does not follow that the visitation of the non-churchgoing population is any better in Scotland, although it is true that an increasing number of Parish Visitation programmes in Scottish cities and towns must have resulted in an improvement in this respect. At least more attention is being paid to the needs of the physically and socially isolated, and they are considered far more as priorities in the programme of local parish mission.

On the question of contentment and isolation, the present research findings in the case of Wedderburn, came close to the Townsend research results on elderly people living in Homes and Institutions.

In both cases a half of the residents expressed feelings of isolation or loneliness. Also the widowed elderly in the present research record lower scores in terms of contentment compared with the single elderly (without feeling cut-off from the society in which they live), which can be compared with the results of Townsend's and Tunstall's research where a high correlation was found between widowhood and loneliness, which was interpreted by Townsend as desolation.

(b) That religious faith plays an important part in the personal adjustment of the elderly

['adjustment' refers to personal crisis history, which in the majority of cases involves bereavement, and also retirement.]

The conclusion from the research is that religious faith and church affiliation played an important part in personal adjustment of the elderly in their most serious personal crisis situation. In the great majority of cases bereavement constituted the major crisis which had to be faced, and a majority of church members were found to be successful in making adjustment to this situation. Yet if faith and church affiliation played an important part it applied to only a half of those making a successful adjustment.

In the crisis of retirement, a majority of church members whose occupations were found in the top three classifications of the Registrar General's scale had a record of successful adjustment.

Parkes in his research, referred to above in Chapter 2, came to the conclusion that it was not wise to relate faith and regular church-going to successful adjustment because several of his admittedly

small sample were insecure personalities who tend to do badly after bereavement. In the present research there was no evidence that any of the respondents were under medical care or psychiatric investigation, although it is quite possible that some had consulted their doctor for help immediately after the bereavement experience. His finding that a majority of the widows in his study had not received ministerial support following bereavement did not agree with the present research, although emphasis has been laid on the fact that a significant minority here made special mention of lack of support from the clergy in this respect. In the Cartwright, Hockey and Anderson study, two-thirds of those who had a religious faith found it helpful at the time of bereavement, but this is different from an estimate made of the part played by faith in the process of adjustment as in the present research. In their research (covering 12 areas in England and Wales) the percentage for major support from the family is 63%, which can be compared with the present research of 65-81%, but for the support of clergymen it is only 2%. It should be added that this was calculated on the basis of the people the respondents found most helpful in order of support. While in our present research we sought to determine how far people regarded the support of Ministers and the Church as major or otherwise, in addition to the other forms of support listed in the Analysis. In their study it is stated that a third of the bereaved had been visited at home by a clergyman, but this was taken to include a visit for official purposes in connection with funeral arrangements. 'Support' in the present research is taken as referring to pastoral care beyond the funeral service.

In retirement studies, the findings of Townsend (in Bethnal Green) that a half of men interviewed, except the sick and infirm, were keen to continue working at a slower pace, were not confirmed in the present study. Here it was clear that a majority of men who had worked in semi-skilled or unskilled employment were keen to continue working only on a part-time basis, which would help them to overcome, to a certain extent, a loss of status, income, or usefulness within the community. The majority of those in professional, business or skilled occupations looked forward to retirement with the opportunities presented to engage in various pursuits and interests, but they had less worry about loss of income compared with the other groups. There were very few expressions of resentment at being cut off from their employment by compulsory retirement in any of the groups in the way suggested by Comfort's writings quoted above in Chapter 2. Pre-retirement training was not actually presented in the form of a direct question, and in the interviews only two mentioned the necessity of making such preparation for retirement.

(c) That the elderly church members do not fear death, or the process of dying, and have a strong belief in an After-life, Judgment and Eternal Punishment.

The conclusion from the research is that the large majority of elderly church members do not fear death and have a strong belief in an After-life. However the hypothesis was not completely verified because a large minority expressed a fear of the process of dying. Also while a similar large minority believed in a judgment

after death, a very large majority did not believe in eternal punishment.

In the case of non-members, a large majority had no fear of death, yet more feared the process of dying than church members. In comparison with the high scores for belief in an After-life for church members, actually a half shared this belief. But a very small number of non-members had a belief in judgment or eternal punishment.

Turning to research studies considered above in Chapter 2, in particular Swenson's investigation of death attitudes in an aged American sample, the writer would agree that fear of death may well exist in an aged sample which is not easily admitted through questionnaire responses. For this reason the present research tried to meet the difficulty by inserting the question relating to the fear of the process of dying. It was discovered that fear of the process of dying uncovers fears about prolonged suffering in terminal illness, but also the fear of the effect this would have on the lives of those nearest and dearest. In his research Swenson found a significant relationship between domestic conditions and attitudes towards death, that is, fear of death was found more often in those living alone than in those living with relatives or in Homes for the aged. In the present research there is a difference between the 40% who express fear of the process of dying in the Homes sample compared with 49% of the domiciled elderly church members (and 61% of non-members). The latter figure includes the elderly living on their own and those living with relatives. But when we examine the

difference between the domiciled elderly living alone compared with those living with relatives, as many as 63% of those living alone expressed no fear of the process of dying, while only 40% of those living with relatives had no such fear. Swenson's findings therefore are not borne out conclusively in the present research.

On the question of belief in life after death, American research, namely, Cavan's (quoted by Argyle) found that the certainty of an After-life increased with age in the elderly age-groups from 71 to almost a 100% (over 90 years). Also 90% of the elderly who were interviewed believed in reunion with loved ones in Heaven. There were no corresponding high percentages on that progressive scale in the present research, and a percentage drop was recorded for belief in reunion with loved ones (on the basis of the figures for belief in an After-life it came to 60% approximately). This not only indicates a difference between the American and Scottish background, but also it should be mentioned that there is a marked difference in time, for the American research was conducted in 1949.

We saw in Chapter 2 above that Gorer's research was not confined to samples of the elderly and was concerned with those recently bereaved, but with only an 8% Scottish sample of the total interviews. It is of interest to note that like Martin's study he found a 50% belief in an After-life. However for belief in reunion with loved ones in Heaven only 17% of the women and 3% of the men in Gorer's sample held this view. It was only a few who made some reference to judgment but not a single one believed in an eternal punishment or damnation. In other surveys or polls of the general population

in recent years we find lower percentages for the above questions, and the tendency is for those figures to drop slightly when new surveys are carried out. But the I.T.A. survey for Britain and N. Ireland (television survey) did have some figures for the part elderly age-groups recorded separately, and 79% of the respondents aged 65 years and over had a belief in a future life. This is certainly a little higher than the results for the present research.

Regarding belief in Hell the only other figures quoted in Chapter 2 apart from Gorer's references, refer to the Gallup Poll (1973) where it is recorded that 20% believed in it. This is still a high percentage when we compare the figures for the present research. It is quite possible that people's answers are different if the question is formulated in terms of 'eternal punishment'. For it may be that hell in some people's minds suggests any state of eternal separation short of actual ideas of everlasting punishment. Certainly in the present research the people reacted very strongly against any idea of punishment continuing indefinitely. A very large majority expressed disapproval

of the concept of eternal punishment. There is, however, a large

Summary who accepted the belief of judgment after death.

This research shows that in relation to the first hypothesis on the elderly concerned have maintained their religious affiliations, attendance at worship, participation in church activities, and personal devotional life throughout their lives. There is no evidence of a great turning to religion or religious practices when people become old.

Regarding the second hypothesis, it was found that the majority of church members were successful in making adjustment in personal crisis history (largely bereavement). While religious faith (and church affiliation) played an important part in this process it only applied to a half of those making a successful adjustment. The hypothesis can be supported only with this significant reservation. Further, in the case of retirement, only those church members in the top three categories of the Registrar General's scale had a record of successful adjustment.

Lastly in the case of the third hypothesis, a large majority of the elderly church members do not fear death and have a strong belief in an After-life. But it must be added that there is a large minority of respondents who expressed fear of the process of dying, and support for the hypothesis must be qualified to this extent. The hypothesis is not supported by the evidence in the case of Judgment and Eternal Punishment. Here there was found to be no strong belief, and a very large majority expressed disapproval of the concept of eternal punishment. There is, however, a large minority who accepted the belief of judgment after death.

In the final part of the work the writer takes up the question of recommendations that have been already suggested in previous sections of the thesis, particularly in Part I.

Recommendations for an effective ministry to the elderly

It is proposed that these recommendations should be carried out within a specific ministry to the elderly under the headings of Church, Congregation and Ministry.

(a) With reference to the Social Service of the Church (in particular the Church of Scotland)

It is recommended that the Church of Scotland, or any other Church, should not continue to build more Eventide Homes in the old pattern, but diversify the kinds of care offered to include smaller units with special care facilities and Sheltered Housing and Flatlets. This policy is mentioned in the 1973 Assembly Report of the Church's Social Welfare programme, and it is of vital concern not only because smaller and specialized units are more in demand at present, but also due to the very considerable problems faced in the maintenance of larger units owing to financial and staffing difficulties.

In the light of this recommendation it must be added that the latest report of the Committee on Social Service to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May, 1974, included a deliverance as follows:

"The General Assembly commend to the Church the Committee's massive work for elderly people carried out in its forty-five establishments throughout the country and learn with interest that, while these homes will all continue their service, it will only be in exceptional circumstances that new homes for the elderly will in future be set up."

In point of fact plans for a proposed Eventide Home were abandoned, and another transferred to a more modest enterprise elsewhere, owing

to the very considerable difficulties experienced in staffing and financial stringencies. The report goes on to observe that the character of the Eventide Home is developing more and more towards intensive care, but the Committee are fully aware that this will put a particular strain on their Homes staff. It will most certainly mean that more specialised nursing staff will be required, and that is already proving difficult in the Special Admission annexes.

The 1973 Assembly was told that future emphasis in new projects will be on Sheltered housing, and the 1974 Report introduced the creation of the Kirk Care Housing Association. It is proposed that sheltered housing will be built in the grounds of some of the Eventide Homes, and it is hoped that other sites will be made available later on. With the growth of this Association's work, the Committee foresees a slowing down of the provision of new Eventide Homes.

It will be appreciated that the substance of the recommendation above is included in the latest developments in the work of the Committee on Social Service.

(b) With reference to the Congregation in community

(i) Church-based community service

It is recommended that the congregation consider its future as a Church-based community service, and not just at parochial level but covering a wider district in co-operation with other Churches, including other denominations. A scheme involving co-operation with a Social Work department, as outlined in Chapter 3 on the lines

of the Portsmouth scheme, would enable the church congregations to provide a true community centre. This can serve a wide variety of people's needs, in particular the elderly, and give 'service' opportunities to different age-groups within the congregation and community. The writer feels that many members of local congregations would be more willing to participate in church activities if they felt that the accent was on community service. This would apply to young people who are far more keen on serving an organisation to help the elderly on a 'Task Force' basis. In other words they see their religious commitment expressed beyond narrow congregational or denominational loyalties in a wider community service.

It follows that if the Church is prepared to fulfil this role:-

1. The Churches must see their future mission more in local community development terms.
2. The Churches must be prepared to set in motion a radical re-appraisal of the use of buildings, organisations and resources of personnel with this in mind.
3. The Churches must provide the information regarding the elderly and disabled living on their own, or in some degree of risk or need, through Parish Visitations and surveys, and do everything possible to keep the information up-to-date.

As far as the latter point is concerned an organisation to do this in Church of Scotland parishes is already set up in the local Elder's district. As an example in London Road parish, the Elders have drawn up 2 lists which include members of the congregation and other elderly people in the district who are

living on their own and in some situation of need. Members of the congregation in this category are generally well-served by visitors from the different organisations, but the others need careful scrutiny to establish the degree of help given by other Churches to their members, or, if not members of any Church, information regarding their real needs. Here consultation is necessary with other local parish Churches or other denominations.

Following from these preliminary findings the Elders have organised a team of local residents, with considerable experience of the neighbourhood, who can act as 'good neighbours'. They are able to supply information about cases of need as they arise and make contact with the elderly through frequent visitation. Where the help of the social services is required, through social workers or health visitors, the information can be relayed from the Elders to the Minister, and so to the appropriate agency. Examples of this procedure have in fact taken place, and the scheme is in the process of being extended to cover a wider area including a number of parish Churches.

4. The Churches should be encouraged to institute programmes of training for those who will be engaged in this kind of visitation and 'good neighbour' policy. They should have some appreciation of the medical, social and theological aspects of aging with special reference to the problems of the elderly in their own community. Also some help is necessary in developing a technique of visiting the elderly in their different domestic situations. When the writer has been asked to visit church groups to help them to plan

such programmes of help for the elderly, he found that many potential helpers asked specifically for guidance in this matter. Finally the increasing co-operation with other agencies means that meetings could be arranged where Doctors, Health Visitors, Social Workers and representatives of Old People's Welfare groups can speak about their own particular problems. In this way familiarity can be gained of the type of work done by the specialized agencies, and deeper understanding may be formed by the latter of the mission and practice of the Church.

(ii) Church programmes for the elderly.

Church programmes for the elderly do not seek to segregate the elderly from other age-groups, but either serve the needs of the elderly or enlist their support as active participants in the work of the Church. In fact integration into the full fellowship of the Church is the aim, rather than an age segregation. It follows that the Church should strive for balance as between youth and age in both membership and leadership of all church activity, and also in the office-bearers of the governing bodies of the Church.

These church programmes should try to promote guidance and help in the spiritual life, for many elderly people are keen to enrich their devotional life. This explains why many are members of Bible study or prayer groups. The shut-in and disabled present special problems, and many in these categories do feel cut-off from the Church life they have greatly enjoyed in the past. Even though they are unable to attend church services and activities, it is still possible to keep them firmly within the Church's life through

private communions, taped worship services and hymn-singing provided by young people. Organisations of a religious nature like 'Sisterhood' meetings meet a special need for elderly women, but there is plenty of scope to enlarge the provision for mixed meetings of a more social and recreational nature. In recent years luncheon clubs, meetings of Old People's Welfare Clubs, where both sexes participate, have been housed in church premises alongside the more traditional Sisterhoods and Men's Fellowships.

It can also be mentioned that a highly successful church activity in London Road Church is the annual outing of the elderly to the Black Barony hotel. The elderly are taken by car from their own homes and enjoy afternoon tea in the company of many old friends or new acquaintances. The success of this venture, and the interesting 'Contact' scheme operating in different parts of the country (generally on a monthly basis), suggests that this kind of approach could be developed for the benefit and enjoyment of a greater number of the elderly.

Also church programmes should try to operate a counselling service within the organisational life of the Church. With the increasing life span, the Church finds itself faced with calls for family counselling - about the give-and-take required if 3 generations are to live compatibly in one house or flat, problems of personal responsibility in such family situations, and problems of privacy and co-operation etc. Also the problems for the family when the elderly parent, usually living on his or her own, is no longer able to remain independent and some provision must be made for the future. But there is also a need to publicise health and welfare provisions

for the elderly, and to introduce some organisation to prepare for retirement or help in the early stages of retirement. This kind of service could introduce speakers on housing needs, social service benefits, pensions, rent or rate rebates, health, cultural and educational facilities, budgeting on reduced incomes, dietary questions, hobbies and crafts, and possibilities of Church and community service. This could be presented in terms of an ongoing counselling unit with speakers, and the membership could have a number of retired people on its panel. Or there is the possibility of introducing a mutual-counselling group meeting regularly to talk over some of the new problems that face the elderly after retirement.

It follows that if such provision can be made in programmes for the elderly:-

1. The Church will exercise a ministry that seeks to give meaning to life in the context of the aging process.
2. The Church will institute programmes which not only serve their general religious and social needs, but try to meet their needs at particular times of change or crisis, namely retirement. It has already been mentioned that the elderly should be encouraged to participate in the ongoing activities of the Church playing their part in association with younger age-groups. Older people, if they are fit, are frequently well-equipped to perform certain pastoral functions on behalf of the Church and should be encouraged to do so within their capacities. Even shut-ins can participate, for instance, in an organized ministry of intercessory prayer. But the Church can also stimulate people to enrich their later years with new interests and responsibilities, and not only

within the Church but also in the areas of community welfare and social betterment. Many have volunteered for appropriate community service in hospitals (hospital car service), Children's Homes, baby-sitting etc. The availability of such a block of discretionary time, talent, and willingness to serve, as some elderly people have at their command, is something quite new in community and ought to be utilised to the full. Above all where the Church does set up organisations for the elderly as described above, these facilities should be made available not just as schemes to build up church membership, but as a real service to the people involved.

3. The needs of the elderly, as with other community needs, can best be served by a ministry which is organised on a team or group basis. Here it is envisaged that one member of the team or group could specialize in the work of caring for the elderly and co-ordinating the planning and organisation necessary for district care and support.

(c) With reference to the Pastoral Ministry

As people get older we find that many begin to reach out for spiritual reassurance. The minister must find time for giving the spiritual counsel his older members need. But not only in the pastoral calls he makes upon his older members, for they should be remembered in the preparation of sermon material and the composition of prayers. There is a special need to help those who have been outside the Church, quite possibly those whose membership has lapsed, to find the way into the Church's life and fellowship without embarrassment.

When we consider the pastoral care of the elderly there are a number of priorities that feature in the normal pastoral routine from week to week. There are the elderly in hospital, very often long-stay patients in geriatric wards, those discharged from hospital with special needs on their return home, the recently bereaved, and, of course, the shut-ins and disabled in their own homes. The problem that presents itself is the organisation of priorities in this field in the light of changing circumstances and the ever-recurring demands from other sources. It is suggested, however, that there is some need to arrange pastoral priorities with reference to situations of crisis, those of continuous strain and need, and the routine calls of long-stay geriatric patients, shut-ins, etc. But if we consider crisis situations as a first priority, then we must remember to include not only illness or bereavement, but the very serious upheavals that can accompany retirement, which may involve moving to a new house with consequent adjustment or even financial troubles. If adjustment is not made successfully, then it is quite possible that serious troubles may follow. If we think, secondly, of situations of continuous strain and need, then we shall find, apart from chronic illness, that loneliness assumes a higher priority which needs special care, and also inter-personal tensions where the elderly are living with others cannot be disregarded. Of course routine calls made on the elderly in different places could take up the major part of weekly visitation, and obviously some selectivity must be employed in this type of visit. It may be necessary to duplicate visits where other church visitors are involved for some special reason, but if the Church has a well-organised

programme for visiting the elderly then the Minister can concentrate on the long-term geriatric patient, the elderly recently discharged from hospital, certain shut-ins, and people living on their own who are outside the scope of such a programme.

It follows that if pastoral care is reviewed with such considerations in mind:-

1. The Minister must be prepared to review his pastoral visitation programme not only in the light of a changing situation, but also on the basis of firmly-established pastoral priorities. In connection with the needs of the elderly, more use should be made of various kinds of congregational visitors - including office-bearers, stewardship visitors, and particularly young people. This ensures a much greater frequency and variety of visit which can satisfy the elderly's need for real contact with the everyday world and even young people's companionship.
2. The Minister must give a high priority to the counselling and care of the bereaved. That this applies to so many of the elderly will be apparent in the substance of the answers in this present research.
3. The Minister, and possibly his colleagues, must try to achieve a greater sense of co-operation and understanding with local doctors particularly in the field of the care of the elderly. If medical-clerical groups have not always been successful or at least passed beyond the stage of discussion, it is quite possible that the increasing problem of the care of the elderly for the local general practitioner could make him more amenable to this kind of approach. He may not have strong religious

connections, but he is likely to be impressed where the Church is involved in true community needs and not only interested in the communion roll. It is also essential to co-operate with medical and psychiatric social workers when they seek the help of the ministry in the rehabilitation of the elderly after a stay in hospital. The need to work closely with social workers and health visitors in the local area has already been shown to be important in the modern setting. In conclusion, the ministry can play its part in the 'team' of workers who have a real contribution to make to community development. We must seek every opportunity to express the mission of the Church in meeting the real needs of the people - both religious, social and economic, and help them to achieve satisfaction and fulfilment in their community. The elderly form a very special part of this endeavour.

(Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973).

Cavan, R.S., in conjunction with Burgess, E.W., Havighurst, R.J. and Goldhaber, H., Personal Adjustment in Old Age

(Scientific Research Association, Chicago, 1949).

Cedarleaf, J.L. and Maves, P.B., Older People and the Church

(Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949).

The Church of Scotland, Reports to the General Assembly (William Blackwood, 1973).

Clinebell, H.J. (Jr.), Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling (Abingdon Press, 1956).

Comfort, A., The Process of Aging, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Covell, H.K., "The meaning of aging to Older People", article in
- Argyle, M., Religious Behaviour (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).
- Baker, J.A., The Foolishness of God (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1970).
- Baran, S., "A Friendly Chat is not enough," New Society, 25th February, 1965.
- Culver, S., Church Progress with the Aging (Association Press, 1965).
- Beard, B.B., "Social adjustment in extreme Old Age" (paper presented at the 1st Pan-American Congress on Gerontology, Mexico City, 1958).
- Beer, G., Exodus (Tübingen University Press, 1939).
- Bonhoeffer, D., Letters and Papers from Prison (enlarged edition), Bethge, E., (edit.), (SCM Press, 1971).
- Cameron, Lewis, L.L., The Challenge of Need (The Saint Andrew Press, 1971).
- Cartwright, A., Hockey, L. and Anderson, J.L., Life before Death, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973).
- Cavan, R.S., in conjunction with Burgess, E.W., Havighurst, R.J. and Goldhamer, H., Personal Adjustment in Old Age (Scientific Research Association, Chicago, 1949).
- Cedarleaf, J.L. and Maves, P.B., Older People and the Church (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949).
- The Church of Scotland, Reports to the General Assembly (William Blackwood, 1973).
- Clinebell, H.J. (Jr.), Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling (Abingdon Press, 1966).
- Comfort, A., The Process of Aging, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965).
- training set up by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Longmans, 1968), commonly known as the Gulbenkian Report.

- Covalt, N.K., "The meaning of Religion to Older People", article in Organized Religion and the Older Person, Scudder, D.L. Henderson, (edit.), (University of Florida Press, 1958).
- Cox, H., The Secular City (SCM Press, 1965).
- Culver, E.T., New Church Programs with the Aging (Association Press, New York, 1961).
- Cumming, E. and Henry, W.E., Growing Old (Basic Books Inc., New York, 1961).
- Cumming, E., "Further thoughts on the Theory of Disengagement", International Social Science Journal, XV No.3.
- Davies, J.G., Every Day God (SCM Press, 1973).
- Edwards, D.L., The Last Things Now (SCM Press, 1969).
- Faber, H., Pastoral Care in the modern Hospital (SCM Press, 1968).
- Feifel, H., The Meaning of Death, (McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., U.S., 1959).
- Gallup Poll printed in the Sunday Telegraph, May 13th, 1973, organised by Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd.
- Gieselmann, R., Contemporary Church Architecture (Thames and Hudson, 1972).
- Gorer, G., Exploring English Character (The Cresset Press, 1955).
- _____, Death, Grief and Mourning in Contemporary Britain, (The Cresset Press, 1965).
- Gray, R.M. and Moberg, D.O., The Church and the Older Person (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962).
- Community Work and Social Change - the Report of a Study Group on training set up by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Longmans, 1968), commonly known as the Gulbenkian Report.

- Havighurst, R.J. and Albrecht, R., Older People (Longmans Green, New York, 1953).
- Henderson, G.D., The Claims of the Church of Scotland (Hodder & Stoughton, 1951).
- Hick, J., "Towards a Christian Theology of Death" in Cope, G., (edit.), Dying, Death and Disposal (S.P.C.K., London, 1970).
- Highet, J., The Churches in Scotland Today (Jackson Son and Co., Glasgow, 1950).
- Martin, J., The Scottish Churches (Skeffington, London, 1960).
- Métroux, J., "Making Sense of Religious Statistics" (Lecture No. 3), Field Studies in Religious Sociology (University of Birmingham, 1966).
- Hiltner, S., "A Theology of Aging" in Scudder, D.L. (edit.), Organized Religion and the Older Person (University of Florida Press, 1958).
- Hinton, J., Dying (Penguin Books, 1967).
- Howie, R., The Churches and the churchless in Scotland; Facts and Figures (David Bryce & Son, Glasgow, 1893).
- Kay, D.W., Roth, M. and Hopkins, B., "Aetiological factors in the Causation of Affective Disorders in Old Age", J. ment. Sci., 101:302.
- Knox, R.A., "Survival after death" in Listener (pub. December 15th, 1955).
- Lewis, C.S., (under the pseudonym, Clerk, N.W.), A Grief Observed (Faber & Faber, 1961).
- Lindemann, E., "Symptomatology and Management of Acute Grief", American Journal of Psychiatry, 1944, 101.

- Lovell, G., The Church and Community Development (Grail Publications and Chester House Publications, 1972).
- _____, "The Mission of the Church and Community Development", Pittsenger, The Expository Times, Nov. 1971, Vol. LXXXIII, No.2.
- McEwen, J.S., Why we are Christians (Church of Scotland publications, Ramsey, S., Saint Andrew Press, 1970).
- McIntyre, J., On the Love of God (Collins, 1962),
- Macquarrie, J., Principles of Christian Theology (SCM Press, 1966).
- Martin, D. in Mol, H. (edit.), Western Religion (Mouton, 1972).
- Métraux, R., Neurologic and Psychiatric Aspects of the Disorders of Aging (Baillière, Tindall and Cox, London, 1956).
- Mills, L.O., (edit.), Perspectives on Death (Abingdon Press, 1969).
- Moberg, D.O., "Religiosity in Old Age", Gerontologist, 1965, 5(2).
- Moberg, D.O. and Gray, R.M., The Church and the Older Person (Wm. B. Eerdmans, Michigan, 1962). London, 1970).
- Shanes, E. see also Moberg, D.O. and Taves, M.J. "Church participation and adjustment in old age", article in Older People and their Social World, Rose, A.M. and Peterson, W.A. (edit.), (F.A. Davis, Philadelphia, 1965). (Oxford University Press, 1965).
- Nelson, G. and Clews, R., A paper to the British Association, 1970.
- Niebuhr, H.R., The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry (Harper and Row, 1956). San Francisco, 1962).
- Orbach, H.L., "Aging and Religion: church attendance in the Detroit Metropolitan area", Geriatrics, 1961, 16.
- Parks, C.M., Bereavement (Studies of grief in adult life), (Tavistock Publications, 1972).
- _____, Reliance of Church Membership in the Burgh of Falkirk (The Church of Scotland, 1973).

- Parkes, C.M., Benjamin, B. and Fitzgerald, R.G., "Broken Heart - a statistical study of increased mortality among widowers", Brit. med. J. (1):740.
- Pittenger, N., The Last Things in a Process Perspective (Epworth Press, 1970).
- Ramsey, S., "Hell" (13) in Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures, Vol. 2, Talk of God (Macmillan, 1969).
- Rees, W.D. "The Hallucinatory and Paranormal reactions of bereavement", M.D. thesis, 1970.
- "Religion in Britain and Northern Ireland - a survey of popular attitudes" (Independent Television Authority, 1970).
- Report of the Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Services (H.M.S.O., 1968), commonly known as the Seebohm Report.
- Schweitzer, A., Reverence for Life (S.P.C.K., London, 1970).
- Shanas, E., Townsend, P., Wedderburn, D., Friis, H., Milhøj, P., and Stehouwer, J., Old People in 3 Industrial Societies (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968).
- Sheldon, J.H., The Social Medicine of Old Age (Oxford University Press, 1948).
- Shenfield, B., Address at the 5th International Congress of Gerontology, (San Francisco, 1962).
- Simmons, L., Role of the Aged in Primitive Society (Yale University Press, 1945).
- Simon, U., Heaven in the Christian Tradition (Rockliff, 1958).
- Sissons, P.L., The Social Significance of Church Membership in the Burgh of Falkirk (The Church of Scotland, 1973).

- Smart, N., "Concept of Heaven" (14) in Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures, Vol. 2, Talk of God (Macmillan, 1969).
- Smucker, D.E., (comp.), Rockefeller Chapel Sermons (University of Chicago Press, 1967).
- Stern, K., Williams, G.M. and Prados, M., "Grief reactions in later life", Amer. J. Psychiat. 108:289.
- Stewart, P., "The days when hell was real" in Scotsman (pub. Wed., April 11th, 1973).
- Stott, M., "World without end, Amen?" in Woman's Guardian (pub. Thurs., Sept. 7th, 1972).
- Swenson, W.M., "Attitudes towards death in an Aged Population", J. Geront., 1958, 16.
- Townsend, P., The Family Life of Old People (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957).
- _____, The Last Refuge: A survey of Residential Institutions and Homes for the Aged in England and Wales (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962).
- Tunstall, J., Old and Alone (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).
- Walker, D.P., The Decline of Hell (Routledge & University of Chicago, 1964).
- Welch, A.C., Visions of the End (James Clarke, 1922).
- Young, M., Benjamin, B. and Wallis, C., "Mortality of Widowers", Lancet (2):454.